

A  
Funeral Sermon  
P R E A C H E D  
( And since Enlarged )  
O N T H E  
D E C E A S E  
O F  
Mrs. *Gertrud Clarkson*  
( DAUGHTER of the Late  
Reverend & Excellent Divine,  
Mr. *David Clarkson.*)  
Who Departed this LIFE, the  
23d. of April, 1701.  

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By *THOMAS RIDGLEY.*

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## Holiday Series

THE YOGI

(b)  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  (with  $\text{HgA}$ )

## 3 H T M O

# HARDIC



TO

The much Respected,  
Mrs. Elizabeth Clarkson.

MADAM,

THE Sad Occasion of the following Discourse, affords a renewed Instance of what is deeply engraven on Fallen Nature, the Truth whereof our Dearest Friends attest to us, as we our selves must do others, that All must die; This you have (with the most Melancholy Accents of Grief) been seeing in your much Lamented Loss; which makes a deeper Impression, not only because She is now no longer Yours (Whom once you could claim as a Most Dutiful, as well as Beloved Daughter:) But in that which renders it more Extensive, that so much of Heaven is fled from hence to its proper Centre, which all that knew her could see in her Conversation; whereby it appear'd, that her Soul was fit for better Entertainment, than those can have, who lodge in Houses of Clay. There are many quieting Considerations, that may be of Use to You under such a Dispensation of Providence, as well as to those that bear a part with you in Grief. Tho' your House be not like a Morning without Clouds, tho' lessen'd and afflicted, yet there is a Sufficiency of Comfort and Salvation in that Everlasting Covenant, which is order'd in all things and sure; 2 Sam.

## The EPISTLE Dedicatory.

23. 5. God is not oblig'd to give An Account of his Matters to Any One, How ought we therefore to be even Dumb, and not to open our Mouths because He does it? Psal. 39. 9. Consider how much God is better than the Creature, not only in a way of Supereminence, but of Communication and Influence. He who has been a Husband to you for some Years past, since the Loss of one so Desirable, can make up your present Loss with Infinite Advantage in Himself. 'Twas doubtless in Mercy to You, as well as Her own Soul, that God was pleas'd to give her such Unspeakable Comforts at last; that You may have some Encouragement in the midst of your Trouble, in the Well-grounded Hope, that She is with Christ.

AS for this Sermon, which (with Enlargements) is here presented to you, I must confess, it was not design'd for Publick View, till your Desire, with that of several Others, laid an unanswerable Obligation on me to alter my Intentions; especially the Occasion I may hereby take, of testifying my Unfeigned Respect to the Memory of the Deceased; And above all the Hopes, that so Remarkable an Instance of Converting, Establishing, and Soul-Comforting Grace which it commemorates, may be of some use for the Ingathering, and Building up of the Church of our Lord Jesus; To whose Grace I Humbly recommend both your Self and Family; Who is able to Comfort your Hearts, and to Establish you in every Good Word and Work.

London, May 14. 1701.

7 DEG

Saints

Saints Kept from Falling,  
and Presented Faultless.

# Funeral Sermon

On the DEATH of

Mrs. Gertrud Clarkson.

JUDE, Ver. 24.

Now unto him, that is able to keep  
you from Falling, and to present  
you Faultless before the Presence of  
his Glory, with Exceeding Joy.

T IS but a few Days since we ap-  
pear'd in this Place, on an Occa-  
sion not unlike to this in what is  
Solemn and Doleful; yet with this Difference  
that the Person whom we now lament, was  
then engaged with us in the Worship of God,

2 **Saints Kept from Falling,**

which prov'd her Eternal Farewell to Publick Ordinances, as soon after she was call'd to take Leave of this lower World.

THE Words we have read were often repeated by her, as being a wonderful Support to Faith in her last Minutes ; which is the Reason why we have now made them the Subject of our present Meditation. The Apostle concludes the many Awakening Considerations in the foregoing Verses, with this Comfortable Salutation ; which is as tho' he should have said ; Tho' Heaven it self was the first Stage of Rebellion when the Angels revolted and fell from thence. [Ver. 6.] And as for this World, here are many Instances of Apostacy and Ruine, *Israël* tho' sav'd from Egypt, yet destroy'd in the Wilderness. [Ver. 5.] *Sodom* with its adjacent Cities, having given themselves over to work Iniquity ; were first devoured in Flames from Heaven, and then condemn'd to suffer the Vengeance of Eternal Fire. [Ver. 7.] There are others mention'd in the following Verses, who had departed from the Ways of God, and perished in their Wandrings. But as for the Church, he tells them in the Text, that there is One who is able, not only to keep them from Falling, but to present them *Faultless* before the Presence of the Divine Glory. The Words also contain a Doxology, God advanced in the saving of Man ; If you look into the following Verse, you will see that the Person

## and Presented Faults.

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son extoll'd is CHRIST, the Only Wise GOD, our Saviour, 'tis He that keeps from falling, &c. In the Words, there are two very great Privileges set before us, one peculiarly relating to Time, the other extending it self to Eternity, especially to the Glorious Sollemity of that Day, when by a Warrant issued out from Heaven, the (a) Saints shall be gathered together, who (b) *In the Appearance of CHRIST their Life, shall appear with him in Glory.*

1. AS to what concerns the Blessings bestow'd in this Life, we have a very Comprehensive Expression in the former Part of the Verse, *Unto him that is able to keep you from falling.* This he does for them whilst they are here, tho' 'tis true, that CHRIST keeps every Member of his great Family; as well that more Blessed Part of it that is Triumphant in Heaven, as those that are in a Militant State on Earth. Were not the Saints in Glory kept by CHRIST, there would be at least a Possibility of their Falling from thence; and as great a Probability hereof as their seem'd to be of the Fall of Angels, or of Man in Innocency: This would cause some Clouds to arise in Heaven, and lessen the Happiness there, which then would rather be let out to 'em on this Condition that they preserve themselves from Falling,

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then

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(a) Psal. 50. 5. (b) Col. 3. 4.

4. ~~things except it from falling,~~  
then given as an (c) *Eternal Inheritance*. But tho' this be a Truth that the best as well as the least of Saints experience, that they are preserved in and by CHRIST; yet this Difference there is between Heaven and Earth, that There they are kept from the Fears, as well as the Dangers of Falling, from the smallest Infirmities, as well as from a total Apostacy. CHRIST brought them to Glory, as their Saviour and Deliverer; he keeps them in it, as their Righteousness and Strength, as He that Confirms and Establishes them, and as their (d) *Eternal Intercessor*. He does not obtain new Victories for them, that would be to suppose them less than compleat Conquerors; nor destroys any thing in them, which would suppose them labouring under some Remainders of Corruption. To keep them there, is to preserve all the Springs of Love to God in a perpetual Motion; he keeps them from having the least Desire after any other Station, but that of Humble, Depending, Admiring and Adoring Subjects to so Great a Majesty.

OUR Preservation on Earth is in another Way, we are (e) *Kept through Faith*; this is as it were a Continual Salvation, a Victorious Deliverance from Enemies, a Maintaining a Principle of Life when our Comforts and Hopes are almost expiring, and the Soul ready

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(c) 1 Pet. 1.4. (d) Heb. 7.25. (e) 1 Pet. 1.5.

ready to Conclude it self as (f) *Pro nemore  
the Dead.* When Enemies appear strongest,  
Dangers most threatening. Nature weakest ;  
then for God to put underneath his Ever-  
lasting Arm, this is that which is here meant  
by a Soul's being kept from Falling.

2. HERE is the Consummation, or Com-  
pleating of all the Blessings we enjoy in time ;  
that which crowns our Hopes, and opens  
Heaven to us with all its Glories ; i. e. In  
that CHRIST is said to be able, to present  
us *Faultless* before the Presence of the Glory  
of GOD, with Exceeding Joy ; Where you  
have,

1. SOMEWHAT supposed (*viz.*) That  
there shall be an *Appearance of the Glory*  
of GOD, or That GOD shall appear in his  
(g) *Glory* ; for that seems to be the Import  
of the Phrase. With what a Loftiness of  
Expression, is GOD's Appearing upon Mount  
Sinai described. (b) *The Lord came from  
Sinai, he rose up from Seir, he shined from  
Mount Paran, he came with ten Thousands of  
Saints.* (i) *His Glory covered the Heavens,  
his Brightness was as the Light ; The Ever-  
lasting Mountains were scattered, the perpetual  
Hills did bowe ; The Mountains saw thee, and  
they trembled, the Deep uttered his Voice, and  
and lift up his Hands on high ; The Sun and*  
*Moon*

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(f) Psal. 88. 5. (g) *Gloria Dei pro ipso passim usurpatur.*  
Beza in Loc. (b) Deut. 33. 2. (i) Hab. 3. 3,4 6,10, 11.

## 6 Saints Kept from Falling,

*Moon stood still in their Habitation.* Thus did GOD appear of old to work particular Deliverances, when the Bright Morning Star of an Eternal Day of Glory was not risen; while there were so few to behold him, and they not able (in their imperfect State) to look directly on the Glory which surrounded them: How much more may we suppose, will God appear with a Lustre of Glory beyond what can be conceiv'd of; when all his People shall not only be summoned out of their Graves, but enabled to behold it.

2. HERE is the Part that Saints shall bear in this Great Solemnity, they are to be *Presented* before GOD. The Word (*k*) signifies a *Setting* or *Placing*, and in *Eph.* 5. 27. where there is mention made of the same thing, the Saints *presented* without Spot; the Apostle uses a Word (*l*) which signifies not only a *Presenting* or *Placing*, but a *Nearness of Access*, which the Persons presented shall have to GOD; which may serve to illustrate the Word in the Text, *Who is able to present us before GOD*; that is, who can so present, or set us before him; as that we shall be Brought Nigh to behold his Glory.

3. HERE are the Circumstances in which they

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(k) *snoxi, Constituere, Collocare.* (l) *I'ra magis horum  
ut juxta, vel ad latius sisteret.*

they shall be in this Appearance of Glory :  
Or how they shall be presented.

1. *FAULTLESS*, (*m*) the Word signifies,  
not only *without Blame*, but *without Reproach*  
or *Disgrace*; so that here is not only a *Near-*  
*ness of Access*, but a kind of *Boldness*, which  
the Saints have in the *Day of Judgment* ;  
1 John 4. 17. Free from Shame, because de-  
livered from Guilt, and found Faultless.

2. *WITH Exceeding Joy* : Heaven must  
needs be fill'd with Joy, when 'tis the Seat  
of Victory and Triumph.

THUS we have the Unspeakable Priva-  
lege of Believers, as Kept from Falling here,  
and Presented Faultless before the Presence  
of GOD hereafter. There is one thing more  
to be noted, (*viz.*) Tho' it be only said that  
CHRIST is Able to keep from Falling, yet  
yet it implies a (*n*) Willingness as well as a  
Power. CHRIST indeed as GOD, by *Ab-*  
*Solute Power*, could have done many things that  
he will not; 'tis not because the Almighty  
Arm is shortned, or his Strength exhausted,  
that he does not create more Worlds, or  
make every Worm, or Pile of Dust more  
Glorious than an Angel: 'Tis not because

he

(m) *ἀμέματος*, *Irreprobus*, *infamia*, *dederori*, *non*  
*obnoxios*.

(n) *Frustra loqueretur de potentia id faciendi, nisi*  
*vellet facere*; *Imo quia id potest facere etiam velle cer-*  
*tam est, quia est Salvator noster.* Cocc. in Loc.

## Saints Kept from Falling,

he is Weak and cannot ; but because 'tis his Pleasure, that such things shall not be done. So that CHRIST as GOD has an *Absolute Power*, whereby he can do what he pleases ; as well as a *Sovereign Will*, that is not under the least Compulsion, or Restraint : Here are no Prescriptions set before him, nor Measures given him to follow in Acting, no Injunctions laid on him, nor can any thing Will'd or Done by him, in any Sense be call'd an Act of Obedience, or bear any manner of Subserviency to the Pleasure of another. But the Case is vastly different, when we consider CHRIST as Mediator, invested in an Office ; as such, his *Power* as to its *Egress* is not so *Absolute*, nor the Determinations of his *Will* so *Unlimited* ; but the Rule and Measure of the Actings of both is that Commission which he has received ; Therefore since they have a Mutual Relation to the Father's Pleasure to be fulfill'd : As we may from his *Willingness* to save Infer that he has a *Power* : So from his *Ability* to save we may Argue his *Willingness*. Thus when in the Text, there is only mention made of his being *Able* to keep from Falling, &c. It implies that he *will* certainly do this ; for that which his Power might have refus'd to do for us, as a *Sovereign Majesty* ; ( Who cannot be a Debtor to the Work of his Hands, who is not obliged to give an Account of his Matters to any one ) it has engaged to perform for

## and Presented Faultless.

for us, as our Gracious and Faithful Redeemer. On this Account we have in this, and many other Scriptures, Encouragement given from the Power of CHRIST ; Heb. 7. 25. *He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him.* 'Twere very small Encouragement to returning Sinners, if it were told them that CHRIST is able to save, but 'tis uncertain whether he be willing or no ; Rom. 14. 4. *He shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand.* So Israel shall be grafted into CHRIST, for God is able to graft them in again, Rom. 11. 23. Observe, the Apostle from the Power of GOD infers the Event ; So we may say, the Saints shall certainly be kept from Falling, and presented Faultless before GOD ; for CHRIST is able to do this for them.

HAVING thus premised a few Things by way of Explication, we may sum up the Sense of the Words in this Doctrine.

Doct. *THAT* the Consideration, that the Lord JESUS is engaged, as well as able, to keep his People from Falling, and to present them Faultless before the Presence of the Divine Glory with exceeding Joy ; redounds much to the Honour of GOD, and the Support of Believers.

*THAT* it redounds to the Glory of GOD appears, in that (as before was hinted) the

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the Words are a Doxology ; that it redounds to the Support of Believers, in that they are Consolatory.

THERE are Three Things to be severally consider'd and insisted on.

First, WHAT is spoken in relation to Believers in this Life, who are here said to be Kept from Falling.

Secondly, WHAT is done for them in the End, when Presented Faultless before the Presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy.

3. WE shall Consider both the Person engaged in this Work, *The Lord JESUS CHRIST*; the Glory that redounds to GOD hereby, and the Unspeakable Advantage that Believers reap from hence. And then make some Practical Application.

First, AS to the great Privilege of Believers, that *Christ is able to keep them from Falling*. In which Two Things are imply'd.

i. *Recovering Grace is of an Advancing Nature*: To be kept from Falling, supposes the Soul to be in an High and Honourable Station, 'tis absurd to apply this to those who are sunk as deep as Hell, and still remaining in that most deplorable Estate; Can there be a Losing, or a Retaining of Love, or Hope, or Joy, &c. where there are not the least Degrees or Principles thereof in the Soul?

So

## and Presented Faultless. 33

So that CHRIST first gives something that is worth his Care, too Excellent to be lost; and then maintains his own Work, and is the Keeper of what he was at first the Giver. We are first carried upward as on Eagles Wings, and then preserved from falling headlong into that State from whence we were taken. So that the Apostle is speaking of One that is advanced, as well as preserved by CHRIST. (o) *Since thou was precious in my Sight, thou hast been Honourable.* Can they be otherwise who are born from above, whom GOD is not ashamed to Own as his People, and to be Called Their GOD; whose Redemption could not be brought about, but at the Expence of the Blood of his own Son, and who cannot be maintain'd but by the Exceeding Greatness of his Power, who can subdue all Things to himself?

2. To be kept from Falling, implies in the Subject preserved, a Proneness and Disposition to Fall: There would be no need of being upheld if it was not so; The watchful Care of Providence over us, and its constant Concern for us, that we may not be lost and ruin'd, the Arm of Power extended to support us, are all Convincing Evidences of this Truth. Why does the Apostle speak of (p) *Finding Grace to help in time of need?* Why does he so much glory in the (q) *Al-sufficiency of*

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(o) Isa. 43. 4. (p) Heb. 4. ult. (q) 2 Cor. 12. 9.

## 12 Saints Kept from Falling,

of Grace, or take so much Encouragement from That Strength which is made perfect in Weakness; If there was no such thing as an Insufficiency or Weakness in us? Our Saviour argues the Spiritual Infirmitie and Weakness of Man, as connoted by his Coming in the Capacity of a (r) Physician, and so having Medicinal Grace to bestow. But before we proceed to the further Prosecution of this Argument, Three Things may be premised.

(i.) A Believer cannot fall from his Interest in the Blessings and Promises of the Covenant of Grace, or those things which are given him in CHRIST his Head: He cannot lose his Interest in that relation which he stands in to GOD as His GOD: There may be a Change in the Divine Dealings, but there can be no Change of his Eternal Counsels, or the Workings of his Heart towards him. Is the Sentence of Non-condemnation passed upon him; It shall never be revoked: And as he is in the Hand of Christ, he shall never be pluckt from thence, but shall have all that GOD the Father has given, in Him, In Whom all the Promises of GOD are Yea and Amen. This secures to him the Blessed End of Faith and Hope, even the Salvation of his Soul; and this secures the Means that he shall not fail of the Grace of GOD. All these Things are

are founded in the Immutability and Faithfulness of GOD, which affords the highest Assurance that can possibly be given, that there is no Falling from these Blessings, which indeed are *Relative* and *Extrinsic*; yea, they are such, that the very Foundation of them is not in himself, and therefore nothing can take them away, or (s) Separate him from his Interest in Christ.

(2.) *WHEN a Believer is said to be prone to Fall, it is not to be suppos'd, that there is any thing Self-destructive in Inherent Grace:* In Nature, almost every Thing preys upon it self, as the Taper that consumes it self to Smoak by Burning; the Strength and Spirits of Man are exhausted, by being put forth in Daily Exercise; all Earthly Things *Wax old like a Garment*; for there are in them the Principles of Corruption: But 'tis far otherwise with Grace, that is not spent or tired by being acted, it never grows weary with Exercise; the Believer indeed is sometimes so, whilst engag'd in Spiritual Employments; but 'tis not *Grace*, but *Nature* in him that flags, and waxes faint and cold; the *Flesh* is *Weak*, the *Spirit* is always *Willing*: I cannot think (with some) that Habits of *Grace* (like those of *Moral Virtue*) are attain'd by Repeated Acts; but 'tis certain, that *Grace* is not lessen'd or enervated by Continued Act-

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(s) Rom. 8. 35, &c.

ings ; the Grace of Love to GOD is not extinguished by its Continuance. The same we may say of all other Graces ; so that there is nothing in any Grace, that tends to the Destruction thereof, neither is there any Thing in one Grace, that has a Tendency to Weaken or Destroy another ; they have not differing Interests or Designs, but all lead the Soul to GOD, as they are Wrought, and Enliven'd by him. In Nature, we find an Inconsistency between Joy, and Sorrow ; Fear, and Boldness, &c. But the Believer knows how to (*t*) *Rejoyce with trembling*, to *Come to the Throne of Grace with an Holy Boldness*, and yet with a *Filial Fear*, and *Self-distrust* ; to *Rejoyce in CHRIST JESUS alone*, and yet to *Sorrow after a Godly sort*. Thus there is a Blessed Harmony in the Actings of Grace, therefore when'tis said, that there is in Man a Proneness to Fall, 'tis not to be suppos'd, that there is any Thing in Grace, that tends to destroy it self. As it is a Reflection on the *Faithfulness of GOD*(as was hinted under the last Head) to suppose, that the Soul shall fail of the Enjoyment of what is Promised in **CHRIST** : So it is a Reflection cast on *Grace*, (which not only Enobles the Soul, above all its other Endowments, but carries in it the Lively Characters and Impressions of the Divine

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(*t*) Psal. 2. 11. Heb. 4. 16. Heb. 12. 28. Phil. 3. 3.  
2 Cor. 7. 10.

vine Glory, and shews forth his Manifold Wisdom and Power) to suppose that this Proneness to Fall arises from any Thing in it, and not rather from himself, and from that Corruption which springs up, and discovers it self to be in the Soul, as well as Grace.

3. WHEN we consider Man as Prone to Fall, we must distinguish between what he is consider'd in himself, and what he is in CHRIST, or what he is when left to himself, or when Influenced and Acted by Christ. There is Ground enough for such a Distinction in Scripture, 2 Cor 3. 5. We are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing, but our sufficiency is of God. So the same Apostle complains, that He does not the Good he would, Rom. 7. 19. i. e. he has no Power of his own in Nature, but in Phil. 4. 13. He can do all things through CHRIST which strengtheneth him, so in 2 Cor. 12. 2. Compar'd with the 9th : As for the Man in CHRIST of such an One he will Glory, tho' of Himself, that is, of Himself under any other Consideration ; He will not Glory, so ver. 10.

11. How can he be said to be Strong even when Weak, to be In nothing behind the very Chiefest Apostles, and at the same time to be Nothing ? With what Colour of Reason can he be said to have nothing, and yet to Possess all Things, 2 Cor. 6. 10. if you dont consider him as in Himself and as in Christ ? So if you consider a Believer in one Sense, he is no more able to Endure, or Keep himself

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from Falling, than an House that is Built upon the Sand, when the Storms and Floods arise and beat against it ; But if you consider him *in the Other*, then the Powers of Darkness cannot shake him, nor the Gates of Hell prevail against him. So far as CHRIST is pleased to Stand by, and uphold him, 'tis as Impossible for him to Miscarry or suffer Ruine, as 'tis for CHRIST himself to be overcome : But whensoever he is left to himself, he is no more able to Stand, than the Lifeless Body can Move or Act without a Soul. This is that which we Understand by Mans being Prone to Fall, which is (as aforesaid) implied in his being Kept. Now that Man is by Nature thus liable to Fall, will easily appear if we consider but the Make and Contexture of the Inward Man : There are Two Contrary Principles in the best of Believers ; Grace does not destroy Corruption as to its Residence and Indwelling, but rather Overcomes and keeps it Under, Curbs its Rage and Tiranny ; but still Sin rises violent Efforts to Maintain its Post, and sometimes it gives forth Laws, and lays Injunctions on the weaker part of Man, which made the Apostle complain *Rom. 7. 23.* of a *Law in his Members Warring against the Law of his Mind* ; and who is there but is at some time or other a sad Instance of this Truth, that when God hides his Face but for a Moment, in some Degree he is said to Fall.

This

THIS might further be Argued from the Consideration of that *Grace*, which is Wrought and Maintained in the Soul ; Though it be of an Heavenly Extract, the most Exquisite and Perfect of all the Works of GOD : Yet 'tis Finite and (u) *Created*, and therefore (as is common to all Creatures) the Necessity of its Duration and Continuance is not the Result of any thing in it Self, but only of the Divine Will : To suppose that any Created thing is Self-subsistent and Independent, implies a Contradiction. And then it is a lessening of the Glory of the Divine Sovereignty, to suppose that GOD is not the Maintainer of his own Work ; or that when Grace is wrought by Infinite Power, 'tis no longer Beholden to it ; or that it can Stand without continued Influences from Him.

BUT that we may call in the Experience of Man to Prove his being Exposed to Fall ; let us consider the violent Opposition Grace meets with in the Soul, not only from the Enemies that lodge there, but from the *Powers of Darkness*. There has been a long War proclaimed, and carried on by Satan, with constant endeavours to make a Second Conquest of Man. (x) *He goes about like a roaring lion, greedy of Prey, seeking whom he may devour.* The most Spiritual Duties are not at All Times free from his

B 3 Fiery

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(u) Psal. 51. 10. Eph: 2. 10. and 4. 24. (x) 1 Pet. 5. 8.

*Fiery Darts*, and that he may leave no Artifice of Ruine unattempted, he Pleads as well as Fights against us. Our Saviour represents him as making his Suit to GOD on this account, *Luke 22. 31, 32.* *Satan bath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat: But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not* Here's a Bold Request made to GOD against his People; 'tis as tho' he should say, ' Let me but Sift this Wheat which thou hast design'd to lay up in thy Garner, and it will appear to have so much Chaff mixed with it, that it will be scarce worth thy Gathering. How unwilling is he to quit his Ancient Possession, and that strong Hold he has so long been Master of! 'Tis not *Yours*, but *You* that he desires. He does not pretend to Ask for a Release from Misery, nor that the (y) *Chains of Darkness in which he is held, as Reserved to the Judgment of the Great Day* may be Unloosed, nor that he may be Reinstated in the Divine Favour, or taken into those Happy Circumstances he is Fallen from; He knows, the Decree of GOD has rendred it for ever Impossible, and therefore has nothing further to Request, if he may but have this Poor Creature Man. Were it not for the Prevailing Intercession of CHRIST, and the Unchangeable Love of GOD, there would be Ground enough to fear that Satan would Gain

Gain an entire Victory ; which proves that a Believer considered *in Himself*, is Prone to Fall ; and which is imply'd in his being Kept by CHRIST. Here we should further shew,

1. *THAT CHRIST is able to keep his People from Falling.*
2. *HOW, or by what Means he is said to do this for them.*
1. *THAT CHRIST is able to keep his People from Falling appears from hence, that he is GOD Equal with the Father, (z) Who Upholdeth all Things by the Word of his Power. Can any thing be Too Hard for Him ? Have any of his Designs been Frustrate for want of Ability to Execute them ? Cannot He secure the Soul in the midst of Dangers, who is the Sovereign Disposer of All Things ?*

BUT if we consider CHRIST as Mediator, we may thus Argue, That he can keep his People from Falling by the Hands of Enemies, Because (a) *He has spoiled Principalities and Powers, and made a shew of them in a way of Triumph in his Cross.* Shall He who has Conquer'd Hell and Death, and bore up under all the Assaults of Divine Vengeance, be at last Baffled by a Creature whom he had long before Led Captive ? Is not He who has Purchased Salvation able to Apply it ?

it? In short, there is as much Ground to Question whether he Died, or Revived, or had All Power given him in Heaven and Earth hereupon, or that he Ascended to the Fathers Right Hand, and there makes Continual Intercession for his People, as to doubt whether he is able to Keep them from Falling.

2. *HOW does CHRIST Keep his People from Falling?*

HE did not Prevent the Fall and Apostacy of Innocent Man, which he could have done: For he had a Design to get Honour thereby, as the *Second Adam*, and Restorer of his People, which he could not otherwise have been; Hereby a Way was made for the Opening the Bowels of *Mercy*, and Occasion was given for Rich and Sovereign Grace to be carried in Triumph in the Chariot of the Gospel.

NEITHER does CHRIST Prevent the Fall of his People into *Particular Sins*, as *David*, and *Peter*, and many Others, are Instances; yea, the best of Saints while in this Imperfect State, may in some Sense be Daily said to Fall, forasmuch as *There is not a Just Man on Earth that doeth Good, and Sinneth not*, *Ecles. 7. 20*. Now every Sin is a kind of a Fall, as may be Gathered from that of the Apostle, *1 Cor. 3. 2*. *In many Things we Offend All*, the Word signifies (b) *We Fall*; now in this Sense

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(b) *fallimur.*

Sense, CHRIST rather Keeps his People from Sinking and Perishing then from Falling ; rather from the Eternal Wrath and Curse of GOD due for Sin, or from the Dominion thereof, from Approving, making Choice of, or committing it with Deliberation, or being easie under it, or giving Way to it, than from being Overtaken by it.

*HE Keeps from Falling*, that is from those Sins that are Inconsistent with Grace ; always Maintaining the Life, and Principle, and Root of Grace in the Soul *If he Falls*, (which the Psalmest seems to take for granted, Psal. 37. 24.) *Yet he shall not be utterly cast down* ; and there are many things he will Teach the Soul by its Falls, as Humility, Self-denial, Self-resignation, a more firm Dependence on Upholding Grace. Hereby he will shew him the Vile Degeneracy of depraved Nature, his Need of renewed Strength from CHRIST, to carry on the Work of Grace begun in him ; Thus the very Falls of Believers are sometimes made a Means to keep them from Falling, and one Sin is made as it were an Antidote against another. But there are other Means, whereby CHRIST keeps them ; of which Some are more *Remote*, yet absolutely Necessary, as His appearing before the Throne of God, and Pleading that their Faith may not fail ; Others are more *Immediate*, as the sending of the Spirit pursuant hereunto, to Establish and Comfort their

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their Souls , till they are delivered from the Remainders of Corruption , when Presented Faultless before God. Which leads us to the 2d. General Head.

2. WE are to shew How CHRIST shall present his Saints Faultless before the Presence of his Glory, with Exceeding Joy. Let us here Consider,

1. *WHAT* is done for the Saints, in that they are said to be Presented before GOD.

2. *THE Circumstances attending this Presenting of them, they are said to be Presented before the Presence of his Glory, and that Faultless, and with Exceeding Joy.*

1. *THEY* are said to be Presented, or set before the Presence of the Glory of GOD. Man by Nature is in a State of Banishment, there is no Liberty of Access for him into the Presence of GOD, unless he be Brought there and set before him. *Adam* had no sooner Sinned, but he Fled from the Presence, and was Afraid of the Voice of his Creator, and not without Reason, for he knew Himself too much Abased, and Unmeet for that Communion, which before he had. *Israel* when GOD was only Come down on Mount Sinai to Prove them, and not to Destroy them ; concluded that every Word which GOD spake Himself and not by Moses, Sounded forth nothing less then Death and Ruine, *Exod. 20. 19, 20.* We find One indeed, who makes a very large Proposal that he

he might Come before GOD, Mic. 6. 6, 7.  
*Shall I come with Burnt-Offerings and Calves of a Year Old,* a small Present to be made to such a Majesty ; and indeed, such as was Daily Offer'd on his Altars, therefore *Will the Lord be pleased with Thousands of Rams ?* Let him make his Demands of as many Thousands as he pleases, a costly Sacrifice which none or at least but few could offer ; if this seems too little, had I Ten Thousand Rivers of Oil more than all the Stores of Nature will afford, they should all be drain'd and measured out to Him ; and if this be not yet enough, he shall have the Prince of my Family, (c) *the Excellency of Dignity, and the Excellency of Power,* even my *First Born* ; a Sacrifice that cannot be Offer'd but with a Trembling Hand, and with the highest Regret of Soul ; yet this He'll do that he may Come before GOD with any Hopes of Acceptance. But Alas ! All his Overtures are in Vain, and the Price he bids too small to Obtain this Favour. The Presence of the Divine Glory would Overwhelm and Confound the Guilty Creature, his Terrors would make him Afraid, and his Hand be heavy upon him when appearing in the Glory of Justice, unless there be one to Interpose, to Bring him in, and set him before GOD, which is the peculiar Work of CHRIST as Mediator,

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(c) Gen 49. 3.

tor, as He who in the Text is said, to be Able to Present you, &c. The Words imply that he undertook a very great Trust, (viz.) that he would Keep them till he shall Present them. This Act of his is as it were his giving up his Account to GOD; we Read in the *i Cor. 15. 24.* of his *Delivering up the Kingdom to GOD even the Father.* By which the Apostle either means, that CHRIST considered as Mediator, shall hereafter Cease to Govern his People in that Way of Administration which now he Exercises, which is Adapted to their present State of Imperfection and Warfare: But shall Suit his Methods of Government to the Circumstances of Perfection, and Glory, unto which he shall then have brought his Subjects.

OR else that he shall Deliver up his Kingdom (d) Materially considered, that is His People to the Father. This Implys that there is a great Trust committed to him, *Isa. 9. 6.* *The Government shall be upon his Shoulder;* He was to bear the Weight and discharge the Office, as well as be Advanced to the Honour of Government. When GOD the Father from Eternity made choice of some to be to Himself a Peculiar People, He put them into the Hands of his Son, to whom

(d) *Cum tradiderit Regnum (i. e.) Ecclesiam fidelium & Congregacionem Electorum Deo. Corin. a Lap. in Lec. See Turretin Thcol. Elenct. Tom. 2. Lec. 14. § 10.*

whom He committed the Management of all their Concerns of Salvation ; (e) *He was to Build the Temple of GOD, and to bear the Glory;* He was to remove all Obstructions out of the way of Salvation. He was to be Surety for them, that in what thing soever they should offer any Wrongs or Injuries to the Justice of God, He should become Accountable. As *Judah* says to *Jacob*, ( When the good Old Patriarch could not without the greatest Reluctancy think of Parting with his Beloved *Benjamin*, least Mischief befalling Him, He should see his Face no more ) Gen. 43. 9. *I will be Surety for Him, of my Hands shalt thou Require Him : If I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the Blame for ever.* Thus says CHRIST (as it were) to the Father, ‘ If I dont Bring thy poor Elect People ‘ who shall Fall, and Place them before the ‘ Presence of thy Glory, I will bear the blame ‘ for ever ; It shall then be said, that I have ‘ not Faithfully discharged my Work as Me-‘ diator, if I bring them not All, and set them ‘ before thee, then let it be said, that I was ‘ not Able to Accomplish what I Undertook. ‘ When once I cast a Vail over my Glory, ‘ and take up mine Abode in Flesh : When ‘ I have (f) *Made my self of no Reputation,* ‘ *and taken upon me the Form of a Servant, I will* ‘ *never*

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(e) Zech. 6. 13. (f) Phil. 2. 7.

' never Claim a Place at thy Rght Hand, 'till  
 ' I Come there as a Conquerer, and thine  
 ' Elect even my Redeemed Ones, shall (g) Sit  
 ' together in *Heavenly Places in me*, as their  
 ' Head and Representative; till they are Ga-  
 ' thered out of the World and brought Be-  
 ' fore Thee, that they may Sit in Glory with  
 ' Me. Hereby thou shalt sustain no Loss of  
 ' Glory, whilst they are unspeakable Gainers;  
 ' (b) thy Righteousness as well as thy Mercy  
 ' shall be Proclaimed in the Justifying and Free-  
 ' ing them from Condemnation. Here is  
 CHRIST taking upon him a Trust ; and it  
 is in Persuance of this Undertaking that he  
 Gave his Soul a Ransom for us, and now  
 Appears in our behalf as an Advocate to  
 Plead our Cause; this is the Reason why he is  
 so much Concern'd for his Sinful Rebellious  
 Creatures, He's their Trustee, they are as  
 it were Cast upon his Care ; and therefore  
 when he finds them Naked, he Cloaths them  
 with his own Robe of Righteousness ; when  
 Polluted, he Sprinkles and Cleanses them  
 with no less than his Blood ; when carried  
 Captive, he Rescues them ; when under the  
 Power of Darkness, he Translates them into  
 his own Kingdom ; when Dead in Trepasses  
 and Sins, he says unto them *Live* ; when  
 Strangers and Foreigners, he makes them  
 Fellow-Citizens with the Saints and of the  
 Household

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(g) Eph. 2. 6. (b) Rom. 3. 26.

Houshold of GOD ; He'll Maintain them at his own Cost, Secure them as in a Pavillion, Comfort them in all Tribulation, Carry them through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and at last Receive them to Glory. All this he does in order to the fulfilling the Trust which is Committed to him.

NOW when CHRIST Presents his People, that is (as it were) his Giving an Account to the Father ; the Justice of GOD weighs Things in an Equal Ballance, takes an Estimate of the Worth and Value of All that CHRIST has done, if He be found Wanting his People cannot be Saved ; His Account will not stand Good before Justice, if he cannot say the Work of Grace in his People is Finished, and the Good Pleasure of Goodness, in bringing about the Work of Faith with Power, Fulfill'd : As once he made an Appeal to GOD, that his Satisfying and Atoneing Work was (*i*) Finished : I say till then, he cannot Present them to GOD, as having done All for them that he Engaged to do. But when this is compleated, then he may say, 'Here am I and the Children which thou hast given me, I have not lost One of them, nor have they been distitute of any Grace, or Comfort which thou didst Design I should Apply to them ; I have kept them through thy Name.  
' Though

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(*i*) John 17. 4.

Though they have lived in this World, they have not been of it ; but a Separate, Peculiar, Devoted People, Zealous of Good Works ; the Country from whence they are now Come, has indeed nothing that can Recommend them to Thee, a Place that as it were (k) Groans under its Burden of Sin, and Misery ; but these Souls have been, whilst there, (l) Seeking another Country, even an Heavenly. A City that has Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God ; (m) Their Conversation has been in Heaven, This hath been the (n) Mark towards which they have been pressing forward. These are those Souls whom thou didst Foreordain to Glory in thine Eternal Counsels, hast Loved them with an Everlasting Love, whom I have Purchased with my own Blood, Preserved with special Care, tho' they were in the midst of Dangers, they have escaped and passed through them, and after many Conflicts they are made More than Conquerors. Thus does CHRIST present his People to the Father. Here we might shew that this is Done for every Individual Believer at Death ; CHRIST then Receives the Soul, and Carries it into the Presence of God, and this is Done in the last Day with the greatest Solemnity that ever was, or shall be, when all the Members

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(k) Rom. 8. 22. (l) Heb. 11, 10, 14, 16. (m) Phil. 3. 20. (n) ver. 14.

of CHRIST shall be Gathered in a Visible Body under Him, as the Prince of their Salvation, and Presented to the Father.

3. LET us consider *The Circumstances which the Apostle here makes mention of, that attend this Solemn Work.* There are Three Things therefore, we may take Notice of.

1. *THE Glory before which, or before the Presence whereof, the Saints shall be Presented.*

2. *THAT they shall be Presented before GOD, as being Faultless.*

3. *THE Exceeding Joy with which they shall be thus Presented.*

1. *HERE is the Glory of the Person, before whom the Saints are Presented:* Before the Presence of His Glory. This either may be referr'd to CHRIST, that He may Present them before the Presence of His Own Glory. Thus the Apostle in that fore-mention'd Place, Eph. 5. 27. *That He might Present it to Himself a Glorious Church, &c.* i. e. Either that He may set it By Himself (*viz*) at His Right Hand, Psal. 45. 9. *Upon thy Right Hand did stand the Queen, in Gold of Ophir.* In this Sence, it may signifie that Great Honour it shall be advanced to. Or else, *That He may present it to Himself, i. e. To His own View:* As by a *Periphrasis*, that Object which we See, is said

to be Presented to the Eye; so when any Thing is Consider'd, 'tis Presented to the Mind. Thus when CHRIST has made His Church Glorious, Faultless, and perfectly Conformed to His own Image; He will behold it with Delight, and an Ardency of Affection, even as those Things are frequently Presented to our Pleased Thoughts, which we Esteem and take Delight in.

BUT tho' this be true, yet there seems to be something else Implied in the Text, (*viz.*) His Presenting them before the Presence of GOD Appear<sup>ing</sup>, more Eminently than ever, in the Glory of his Divine Perfections; Manifesting himself in an Immediate Way appropriate to the Heavenly State, and so it signifies the Saints Glorification, as consisting in their being received into the Presence of GOD; under which Notion, the Happiness of Heaven is sometimes set forth: As that is the Place where GOD is always with his People, as the Fountain of their Joy, and Blessedness; *Psal. 16. 11. In thy Presence is Fulness of Joy.* So the Apostle sets forth the Glory of Heaven, as a *Being present with the Lord*, *2 Cor. 5. 8.* Which signifies the Glorified State of the Soul, as being Brought into, or set Before the Presence of GOD.

THERE is still something More included in the Words (*viz.*) That CHRIST shall present his People to the *Father*. As it was

*From*

*From Him* that he received them before Time, that he might redeem, and preserve them from Falling: So when Time shall be no more, 'tis *To Him* that he makes a Surrender of them again; That as all the Glory both of the Redeemer, and the Redeemed, was Inchoatively from him, as the Fountain: So it may be resolved in, and referr'd to Him as the Ultimate End, of all Things.

NOW when CHRIST thus presents his People to the Father, it shall be with Amazing Circumstances of Glory; GOD will not lay aside the Ensigns of Majesty, and Greatness, when he manifests himself to his Creatures; especially when his very Design herein is to aggrandize his own Name, and appear Glorious in their Eyes. GOD the Son indeed, in his first Appearance in our Nature, came as was necessary, in a Low Condition; yet before that, or since his Ascension into Heaven, he has never been seen of any, but with such a Glory, that his poor Mortal Creatures were not able to bear the Lustre thereof. Thus before his Incarnation, when he appear'd in a Vision to *Isaiab*, Chap. 6. 1, to 5. He is represented as *Sitting upon a Throne, High and Lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple*; the Seraphims proclaim and adore *His Holiness, and Glory, as filling the Earth*. *The Posts of the Door are shaken, and the House filled with Smoak,* and the Astonish'd Prophet cries out,

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*Woe! is me, I am undone, a Man of Unclean Lips, for I have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.* The Apostle Paul tells us, 1 Cor. 15. 8. that he had Seen him since his Ascension; and that might be either at his Conversion, Acts 26. 13, &c. CHRIST appear'd to him in Light above the Brightness of the Sun, and spake to him with a Voice; but it was with such a Glory that He trembled, was astonished, and fell to the Earth. So when he heard Things Unutterable, and then, as 'tis more than probable, saw CHRIST, when he was Caught up into the Third Heaven: His Soul was at the same time, with Surprise, and Wonder, as it were chased out of its Body, 2 Cor. 12. 3, 4. As for John when he saw CHRIST, with what a Glory did he appear! Rev. 1. 14, &c. His Eyes, were like a Flame of Fire; his Feet like Brass, as if they burned in a Furnace; his Voice, as the Sound of many Waters; his Countenance, as the Sun when shining in his Strength. And in the 17th. Verse we find the Apostle Falling at his Feet as dead. The Glory was too great for Frail Man to behold. How unspeakably Glorious will he then appear, when his People are to be presented to GOD! The Apostle in 1 Pet. 5. 1. calls it *The Glory that shall be revealed*, as tho' the Glory of GOD was now retired, and hid, in Comparison of what shall then be manifested. The same Argument that the Apostle Paul makes use of to prove the Glory

Glory of the Gospel Dispensation, above the Legal, we may apply to prove the Glory of CHRIST's Second Appearance, in the last Dispensation of things; above all other Glories which have been revealed ; Thus in *2 Cor. 3. 7, 8, 11.* *If the Ministratiōn of Death,* that is the Law given in such a Terrible Way, as tho' it had been the Ministratiōn of Death ; when GOD appear'd as tho' he had a Design to destroy them, tho' it was only to humble 'em ; if this says he was So Glorious, as that the Children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the Face of Moses, for the Glory of his Countenance : Shall not the Ministratiōn of the Spirit, that is the Gospel, in the more Bright and Clear Dispensation thereof by the Spirit, Be rather Glorious. If that which is done away was Glorious, much more that which continueth. If those dark Shadows, and Types under the Ceremonial Law (which were ordain'd to continue no longer than 'till CHRIST the Substance should come) were instituted with such a Glorious Appearance of God : How much more Glorious will he appear in his Gospel, which remaineth For Substance for ever, and as to the Way of Administration, abides to the End of Time. We may according to the same way of Arguing, infer, that if GOD appears with such a Glory in Time, when his People are in an Imperfect State, when his Work of Grace is growing to Maturity, and carried on Gra-

dually in them; when the best of Believers cannot behold him, but through a Glass darkly: With how much greater Glory will he reveal himself, when he appears to a Glorious Church, that he finds Faultless, and that is brought into his Presence, that it may behold him Face to Face, and be satisfied with the abundance of his Glory. But more particularly let us Consider, What is that Glory in which he shall appear in that Great Day.

GOD is then said to be Glorious, when he makes himself known in his Attributes, and Perfections; then all his Attributes will be magnified in the receiving the Saints into Glory, as well as they are here, in fitting them for it. *Power* shall raise them up at the last Day, and execute the Sentence that shall then be passed. *Faithfulness* will be seen in the Accomplishment of all the Promises. *Wisdom* in the exact Harmony, that then, more clearly than ever, will appear between the Means, and End of Grace; and in the Unfolding of what has been Dark, and Mysterious in the Word, or Providences of GOD. *Goodness* will be glorified in Embracing, Providing for, and Entertaining of them. But those Attributes whereby GOD more especially takes an Account of Things, measures the Creatures Conformity to himself, and their Meetness for Glory, are his *Justice* and *Holiness*, in the Glory whereof GOD more Eminently

Eminently appears, when his People are presented to him.

I. THEY are presented before GOD, as appearing in the Glory of His Justice ; Hence the Season appointed for this is called the Day of Judgment. GOD's Electing to Eternal Life was indeed an Act of Pure Grace ; he did not fore-ordain to save them, that hereby he might declare his Righteousness ; because this was a Sovereign, Unmerited Act, but in Bringing and Receiving them to Glory, he uses such Methods, that Justice, and Mercy meet together ; One does not tend to the Lessening, and Disparaging of the Other. Thus when a poor Creature is considered as Wallowing in his Blood, Helpless, and without Hope, Mercy takes Notice of, and bestows what is suitable, for his Relief ; but when he is considered as a Criminal, 'tis Justice that must acquit, and free him from Condemnation. If there had been nothing in the Fall'n State of Man but Natural Misery ; as it could not have been inflicted, by Justice : So it might have been removed without it, by Mercy and Power : But as Sin is the Ground, and Main Ingredient of Man's Misery, which renders him a Debtor, and Offender, under Guilt, and liable to Condemnation ; here Justice is concern'd in passing this Sentence against the Soul ; and therefore 'tis the same Attribute that must discharge him from that Sentence, if Justice be offended, It must be satisfied. Tho'  
when

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when CHRIST presents the Soul before the Presence of GOD, 'tis not to be supposed that he then satisfies his Justice ; that was perfectly done when he was raised from the Dead. Nor is this the first Season of Justice's declaring it self satisfied for them ; for that it has often done. Every Grace that has been implanted, and every Comfort that the Spirit of GOD has bestowed, as a Seal set to his own Work were Evidences of this, that GOD was pacified towards them : But when they are presented, then Justice declares this with a greater Solemnity in a more Glorious, and Visible Way, and with greater Conviction, and Fulness of Evidence as well as with unspeakable Comfort, and Joy attending it. And then, here is a Publick Declaration made, of the Capacity in which the Soul stands, as Faultless. Justice cannot discharge any one but as Guiltless, he must be ransom'd by an infinite Price, otherwise he stands condemn'd. Now when Christ presents his People, He also presents, and pleads his own Merits, the very same Incense in which their Persons have before been accepted, and their Services have ascended, as with a sweet smelling Savour, unto GOD ; Otherwise Vindictive Justice would be a Terrour to them ; as we see when a poor Creature is under the Apprehensions of Divine Wrath, and cannot by Faith behold his Interest in that Righteousness, in which he might stand with Comfort and Boldness before

fore Justice ; How is he even confounded ? He must needs conclude, that it is a Fearful Thing to stand before a Righteous God, a Sin-revenging Majesty ; but in that Great Day the Saints shall have a perfect View of their Interest in CHRIST, and that Righteousness of his that shall adorn, and cover them like a Garment ; which is absolutely needful, inasmuch as they are to be set before the Presence of GOD, appearing in the Glory of Justice.

2. ANOTHER Attribute in the Glory whereof GOD appears, when his People are presented to him is *His Holiness* : This is that whereby He is infinitely opposed to every Thing that argues Imperfection ; He is *A GOD without Iniquity*, Deut. 32. 4. *That has no pleasure in Wickedness*, Psal. 5. 4. So in Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of Purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and canst not look on Iniquity.* 'Tis not said ; He Does not, or Will not look on Sin (*i. e.*) with Approbation ; but he Cannot. When Mercy refuses to look upon, and extend its Bowels towards a Miserable Creature ; 'tis not because he could not have done it had it been his Pleasure, but because he would not : But GOD's Hatred of Sin is not barely the Result of his Sovereign Will, but 'tis necessary from the Purity of his Nature, he would cease to be GOD, an Infinitely Perfect Being, if he should take pleasure in it. He might have reveal'd his other Perfections  
to

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to his Creatures without any Manifestations of Mercy, Grace, Long-Suffering; but in what way soever he appears Glorious, the Glory of Holiness seems included, if he be not Glorious in Holiness, he cannot be Glorious in any of his other Attributes; 'Twould be no Glory for Wisdom to contrive, Goodness to bestow, or Power to produce any thing, but what bears an exact Conformity to the Nature, and Will of the Supreme Agent. Now this Conformity is *Holiness*, 'tis that whereby GOD acts like himself, as well as that whereby *He is what He is*. Now 'tis before this Holy GOD that they are to be presented; tho' it cannot so properly be said that Holiness passes Sentence, acquits, condemns, or justifies, but rather Justice; but in the Soul's Appearance before a GOD glorious in Holiness, there must be a Conformity to him, as thus consider'd.

THIS consists in the Image of GOD re-instamped on the Soul. Therefore GOD will have his People be *Holy because He is Holy*; Lev. 19. 2. So in 1 Pet. 1. 15. we have mention made of an *Holiness in all manner of Conversation*, and that in Conformity to an *Holy GOD who has called them*.

AND then this Conformity consists in our being exactly Framed, as GOD's Workmanship, according to that Idea, or Platform laid in his Eternal Counsel, to which we were to be wrought. Thus when Man was put into the Hands of CHRIST, that which was to be the Rule

Rule, and Measure of that Perfection to which he was to bring them, was that Model which was laid in the Eternal Mind. As GOD works all things according to the Counsel of his own Will, so CHRIST as Mediator, makes the same Counsel of the Divine Will the Standard, according to which he does all things for, and in his People. Now GOD the Father has designed, that his saved Ones shall not only have their Guilt removed, by an Infinite Price, but their Perverseness and Obstinacy subdued, their Corrupt Nature must be changed, new Principles wrought, the Fear of GOD implanted in their Hearts, and his Law written in their Inward Parts, such Graces, and Comforts must be applied which GOD has promised, they must be so framed, and disposed, and as it were trained up for Glory ; that when brought there, the Blessed Society they are admitted into, and the Employment they are engaged in, may be delightful, and not a burden to them. When CHRIST has done this for his People, then they are fit to be presented before GOD, when appearing in the Glory of his Justice, and Holiness. But this is more expressly set forth in what the Apostle adds concerning the Circumstances, in which the Persons shall be, who are said to be presented before the Presence of the Divine Glory ; which leads us to the *Second Thing.*

## 2. THAT

2. *THAT the Saints shall be presented Faultless*; 'Tis an Amazing Consideration. Who could ever suppose when he looks on Fallen Man, once so Vile, and Criminal; whose Offences were so innumerable, and hainously aggravated, a Creature so (o) *Laden with Iniquity*, and Guilt, whose Primitive Beauty is so sullied, and his very Nature stain'd with Corruption, and Defilement. If you look back and see him (p) *Cast out to the Loathing of his Person, Polluted in his Blood*; Who would suppose that He should be found Faultless? But such a One he must be, if presented before the Presence of the Divine Glory. *Faultless*, that is, as the Apostle to the *Ephesians* explains it, (q) *Not having Spot, or Wrinkle, or any such thing*. Some by this understand the Church as freed from the Blemish of Sin, and the Wrinkles of Age, and Sorrow; They shall as it were, (r) *Renew their Youth like the Eagles*. And then here's not only a Freedom from Sin, and Mifery, but from every thing that bears the least Resemblance thereof, *Or any such thing*; from that which carries in it the Appearance, as well as the real Nature of Evil. Seeming Evils are sometimes very afflictive to Believers; Zion is troubled when it does, but suppose, that (s) *GOD has forsaken her, and her GOD has for-*

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(o) Isa. 1. 4. (p) Ezek. 16. 5, 6. (q) Eph. 5. 27.  
(r) Psal. 103. 5. (s) Isa. 49. 14, 16.

forgotten her. When all Her Complaints were founded on a Mistake; For GOD had graven her upon the Palms of his Hands. How are we sometimes tormented with groundless Fears, and apprehend that, to be a Destructive Evil, which is design'd for our Advantage. David was forced to chide, and rebuke himself, when in such a Frame, (t) *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?* ‘What means this Wretched Heart thus to recoil within my Breast, to seem so discontented under the Hand of GOD? Tho’ his Waves and Billows overwhelm me, and the Common Reproach of the Enemy is, ‘Where is thy GOD; Yet are not thy Thoughts too black? Do not thy Sorrows swell too High? Is there so great Occasion for this, whilst thou canst say, that GOD is the Health of thy Countenance, and thy GOD? Thus it is sometimes with Believers here, but hereafter, they shall be delivered from every thing that looks like a Spot, or Wrinkle, as well as that which is so indeed. The Church must needs be very Glorious, when without Blemish. There never was an Instance of a Creature without Fault since Adam fell, CHRIST only excepted; for it implies a Faultlessness, not only in the Account of Justice: But that the Soul is without Stain, and Pollution; denoting its Perfection, as to the Work of Sanctification,

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(t) Psal. 42. 11.

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tion, which is compleat in none, until they are received into a more Glorious World than this. Then the Soul shall not only appear in that Righteousness, which before was put upon him ( which remains Unchangeably the same, not brought to Perfection by Degrees, as to its Essentials ; however the Discoveries, and Manifestations hereof are Gradual, as well as the Blessings that are consequent to it ) but He shall also be Perfect, as to the Work of Grace, which has been daily carried on, but never compleated till then. All Infirmitie shall be removed, Backslidings healed, Inward Disorders composed ; when the Soul, as it were (*u*) *Makes GOD his Habitation*, takes up his Rest in him ; all the Powers, and Faculties thereof, with a Free, Undisturbed Motion, like so many Streams, ran into, and meet in Him, as their Chief Good, Ultimate End, and only Happiness ; such an One is made perfectly receptive of Spiritual Communications, and meet to be a Participant of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

BUT that we may be the more affected with this Unspeakable Privilege, let us take a View of the Soul as put into the Hand of CHRIST, and as presented by him to the Father. Was he given to CHRIST, as a Faultless Creature ? Was he then considered as

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(u) Psal. 91. 9.

as Beautiful, or Comely, as without Sin, or Guilt? That is not to be supposed, for if so, there was no need of an Innocent Creature's being committed to a Mediator, to reconcile him to GOD, and purchase Salvation for him. He was indeed given to CHRIST, as a Chosen Vessel, designed for the Master's Use, as One to whom GOD would afterwards manifest the Exceeding Riches of his Grace: But he was not then considered, as having any Grace, nor as having an Interest in any Promise of Grace; for all Right to the Promises of the Covenant of Grace pre-supposes an Interest in him, who is the Head of this Covenant. Now the Soul consider'd as given to CHRIST, could have no Interest in him, for that is, in Order of Nature, consequent to this Act of Donation; and therefore 'twas a graceless Creature put into the Hands of CHRIST, that from him he might have a Right to the Eternal Promises of Grace, that were made in him. And then he could not be consider'd, as having any Blessings purchased, or Righteousness wrought out for, or applied to him; for as the One supposes the Undertaking of CHRIST to redeem, together with the Actual Execution hereof: So the Other supposes the Actual Existence of the Creature, to whom these Purchased Blessings are to be applied. Consider further, that when ( being predestinated to Glory ) he was given to CHRIST, he was  
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not consider'd, as conformed to the Image of CHRIST, for that was one End of these Eternal Acts of GOD; he was given to CHRIST, that he might be changed into his Likeness, as the Apostle in Rom. 8. 29. says concerning GOD's Predestinating, 'twas that we may be *Conformed to the Image of his Son*; and therefore as the End is not antecedent to the Means: So the Elect were not consider'd, as conform'd to the Image of CHRIST, when put into his Hands. So that he took the Care of Creatures Deformed, and very unlike himself. And then, they were consider'd as Unclean, and Unholy, far from being Faultless, when given to CHRIST; that appears, in what he himself says, John 17. 19. *I sanctifie my self that they may be sanctified.* Therefore I set my self apart, and undertake the Work of a Mediator, and Surety for them, that they may be made Holy. Thus he received them as Filthy and worthy to be Abhorred; but he presents them as Washed from all Uncleanness, and Abominations in his own Blood. They were given to him as Debtors, owing Ten Thousand Talents to the Justice of GOD, and having nothing to pay; he presents them as having their Debts put on his Account, and pay'd by him, the Hand-Writing that stood in Force against them cancell'd, and they fully acquitted. He received them as under the Condemning Sentence of the Law, Children  
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of Wrath, the worst of Criminals, Hell excepted: He presents them as Justified, Reconciled, (and to use the Word in the Text (for what more Comprehensive Expression can be found) as being render'd *Faultless*.)

3. *HERE* is a Circumstance immediately following, upon their being thus presented *Faultless*, i. e. with Exceeding Joy! Doubtless, if Sin be vanquish'd, Sorrow shall be banish'd; if the Saints are found without Fault, they shall be presented without Fear, or Trouble. The Joy here spoken of, is not limited to any particular Person; and therefore, it may refer to GOD himself, or to the Glorious Hosts of Angels (that bear a part in this Days Solemnity, so far as to be Admiring, and Joyful Spectators of what is done) as well as, to the Saints themselves.

IF it be applied to GOD, so as that He is said to rejoice when this Present is made to him; we must not suppose, that there are any Passions in the Divine Nature; that would be to conceive of him as Mutable, for Passions infer a Change in their Subject; they are a Kind of Commotion of Soul, as affected with something out of it self. And that this argues Imperfection is plain; for if it be the Expectation of Enjoying some Future Good that moves, as in Desire, and Hope; it implies that the Soul at present is Imperfect, whilst reaching after what it cannot now attain. So when

the Good that moves the Soul, is in our Possession ; as in Love, Delight and Joy ; it argues that there is an Accession of Happiness, which before it had not. Now GOD cannot be moved by any thing Future, or Present, or receive any Addition to that Glory or Happiness, which he had in himself from all Eternity. Therefore when he is said to rejoice, Joy is not a Passion in him, as in a Creature ; But it consists ( as I humbly conceive ) in that Harmony which there is between his Will, and Works. Thus GOD's (x) Accomplishing what he design'd to do, is his Rejoycing therein. This Joy of GOD is set forth by several Expressions, sometimes 'tis call'd His Resting in what he does, thus Zeph. 3. 17. *He will rest in his Love.* That is, when he has manifested his Love to his People ; it shall appear so Glorious, and Agreeable, and commensurate to his Eternal Designs of Love and Grace, that GOD cannot see any Reason, why he should have acted otherwise in the Displays thereof than he has done. And then the Joy of GOD denotes the same thing as his Well-Pleaseness ; as in Mat. 3. 17. *This is my Beloved Son in whom I am Well-pleased :* The Work he is engaged in is Pleasing to me, that is, it is Will'd by me ; He is fulfilling my Eternal Pleasure. The Apostle to the Ephesians, calls

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(x) *Passiones attribuuntur Deo, quoad Effectum; non quoad Affectionem.*

the Determinations of the Divine Will (y)  
*The good Pleasure thereof; and elsewhere (z)*  
*The Good Pleasure of his Goodness.* The Prophet *Malachy*, Chap. 3. 4. speaks of the Offerings of *Judah*, as *Pleasant to the Lord*; that is, Agreeable to his Will. Sometimes the same thing is signified by the *Satisfaction*, or *Delight*, which GOD takes in his People. And his *Desiring* of them, signifies his using suitable Means in Order to the Accomplishing of his Purposes towards them. Now whatsoever GOD's Designs are, whether to Glorifie his Mercy, or his Justice; still we find that the Accomplishment of them is set forth, by his Rejoycing in the Thing done. Thus in *Deut. 28. 63.* *As the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you.* Now if the Joy spoke of in the Text, with which the Saints shall be presented be applied to GOD; it signifies, his Accepting of what is presented to him, or that he acquiesces in it, or is pleased that they are brought to Glory, in as much as it is the Accomplishment of his Eternal Designs of Grace; in which he Intended to bring them there.

IF it refer to CHRIST, as Mediator, so it may truly be said, by reason of a Communication of the Properties of each Nature; that the same Person that is GOD, does, as

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(y) Eph. 1. 5. (z) 2 Thes. 1. 11.

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Man, Rejoyce with a Joy peculiar to a Creature, when presenting his People to the Father.

BUT we may consider this Joy, as applied to Angels, and so it signifies the Adoration, and Glory they ascribe to GOD, for what is then done to the Saints; They are always ready, in a way of Triumph, to sound forth the Praise of the Glory of GOD, when ever they see any Discoveries thereof, or Occasion is given them to celebrate his Name. We find them very ready to joyn with Man in Ascribing Power, Riches, Wisdom, Strength, Honour, Glory, and Blessing to the Lamb upon a Throne, *Rev. 5. 11, 12.*

WHEN *David* thought his own Tongue, or Heart was not sufficient to Bless and Praise GOD, for his *Forgiving and Redeeming Love*, for his *Mercy which was from Everlasting*: He calls in the Assistance of the *Angels*, that *excel in Strength*, that they may joyn with him in this Work, *Psal. 103. 20.* We find that in the Morning of Time, *When the Corner Stone of this Earth was laid; the Morning Stars sang together: And all the Sons of God did shout for Joy.* *Job 38. 6, 7.* So when CHRIST came in the Flesh; his Appearance was proclaimed by an Host of Angels, ascribing *Glory to GOD in the Highest*, and admiring *His Good Will express'd to Men,* *Luke 2. 14.* And when he shall come again a Second Time, it shall be *In the Glory of his Holy Angels,*

Angels, Luke 9. 26. See how the Apostle describes this, 1 Thes. 4. 16. *The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven, with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of GOD.* Thus the Angels may truly be said to Rejoyce in this Appearance of the Glory of GOD.

BUT they who are in an Especial Manner the Subjects, as well as the Occasion, of the Joy of that Day, are the *Saints*; they shall be presented with Exceeding Joy, that is, they shall then be transported with Exceeding Joy; it shall be their Day of Triumph. (a) *Abrraham rejoiced, when looking through many Ages, He saw the Day of Christ;* He was glad when he saw the Gospel-Day, tho' at so great a Distance. And 'twas the continual Language of the Jewish Church, that CHRIST would (b) *Hasten his Coming;* *That the Day may break, and the Shadows flee away.* And the Gospel Church, since his Ascension into Heaven, is now breathing forth this Request, (c) *Come, Lord Jesus, Come quickly.* Come, and put a Final Period to these Days of Sorrow, and Absence; Let Sin, and Misery, and every thing that opposes thy Glory, and the Happiness of thy People be banish'd as far as Hell. Come and Revive thy Declining, Fainting, and almost Expiring Interest, and

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(a) John 8. 56. (b) Cant. 8. 14. & 2. 17.  
(c) Rev. 22. 20.

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Receive thy People to thy self; surely when this is done, 'twill be with Exceeding Joy. We read in Zech. 4. 7. that when the Head-stone of the Temple, which was but a Type of this Glory, was to be laid; *It was brought forth with shoutings*, and that they should *Cry Grace, Grace unto it.* Thus when the Top-stone of a Believer's Happiness is laid in Glory, there will be an Universal Shout, every One proclaiming, and admiring that Grace, that long before, laid the Foundation Stone, and shall then have finished the Work of their Salvation. If there be such a thing as Joy in *This World*, how much more abundant shall it be in *The Other*. If the Saints rejoice, when (d) *They are Partakers of the Sufferings of Christ.* (e) *When counted worthy to suffer Shame for his Name.* (f) *Taking joyfully the Spoiling of their Goods, knowing that they have in Heaven a better and more enduring Substance.* (g) *Counting it all Joy when Grace is tried, and Patience takes Occasion to show it self, Under divers Temptations.* How much more will they Rejoyce, when after they have been tempted, and suffer'd a while, they are *Made perfect*. If there be Joy annexed to (h) *Believing,* (i) *Hoping,* (k) *Finishing our Course,* in this World: How much more shall there be Exceeding Joy in receiving a *Crown of Glory*, when presented

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(d) 1 Pet. 4. 13. (e) Acts 5. 41. (f) Heb. 10. 34.  
(g) Jam. 1. 2, 3. (h) Rom. 15. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 8.  
(i) Rom. 5. 2. & 12. 12. (k) Acts 20. 24.

sented before GOD, in the Next. Does not the *Husbandman* rejoice, in the Day of (*l*) *Harvest*? Or the *Conqueror*, when returning home with *Victory*? Will not he who has been (*m*) *Afflicted, Tossed with Tempest, and not comforted*, often ready to sink, and be swallowed up by the Boisterous Waves, Rejoyce, when arrived to his *Desired Haven*? Consider further, Is there not Matter of Joy, when all the Springs of Sorrow are dried up, and that which once caused Fear removed; when all Clouds are dispersed, and the Dark, Stormy Day of Life, is not only concluded; but the Soul has attain'd the very End of Living, the End of Faith, and Hope; when associated with an Innumerable Company of Angels, received into that General Assembly, and Church of the First-Born, which is Triumphing in Heaven, with the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, and that can stand before GOD the Judge of All, without being consum'd at his Appearance. Shall not the Soul Rejoyce, when deliver'd from those Burdens it has so long groaned under, when there is no longer a Body of Sin and Death, no more Spiritual Enemies to conflict with, nor puzzling Difficulties to surmount; yea, when Death, the King of Terrors, is swallowed up in Victory. In short, if there be any Sweetness in the Accomplishment of the

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(*l*) Isa. 9. 3. (*m*) Isa. 54. 11. comp. with Psal. 107. 30.

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Promises, if any thing desirable in those Mansions of Glory prepared for Believers, if Rest be delightful to the Weary, or if there be any thing advancing, or satisfying in the Enjoyment of GOD, and in all the Blessings of an Happy Eternity; then the Soul that is presented Faultless before the Presence of the Divine Glory, shall have exceeding Joy. Which leads us to the *Third General Head.*

3. *WE are to Consider the Person by whom the Saints are presented; together with the Glory that redounds to GOD, and the Unspeakable Comfort and Advantage that Believers reap from hence.*

1. *THE Person that preserves his People from Falling, and presents them before GOD, is the Lord Jesus.* He alone can do it; 'tis well for us that we are not committed to our own Care, or that the Management of the Concerns of our Souls is not put into the Hands of a meer Creature; but of CHRIST himself. The Consideration of the *Person*, to whom this great Work and Trust is committed, will sufficiently prove his Ability, Fitness, and Willingness to discharge it. Hereby we may see the Foundation of our Hope, that being interested in him, we shall be kept from Falling, and presented by him, to the Father. The Apostle ascribes *Glory, Majesty, Dominion, and Power* to him. Here  
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is that Sovereignty and Lordship, which he has, as Heir of all things, and that Power, by which he brings about his Work which he has engaged to discharge, and the Revenue of Glory due to him hereupon. And that it might appear, that these are not empty Titles, but have a real Foundation in his Person, we have an Account that he is *GOD*, no Person less than *GOD*, has a right to what is here ascribed to him. And because the Existence of *GOD*, abstractly consider'd from his Will to save, does not necessarily infer the Salvation of a Creature; therefore he makes mention of him as *Our Saviour*, one who has enter'd into this Relation, and took the Work of Salvation upon himself. And because it requires Wisdom, to discover the Mind of *GOD* to us, and to cause all Things to work together for our Good, he stiles him *The only Wise GOD*. All these Things we might have distinctly consider'd, and shew'd that no less a Person than this, could be our Preserver, or present us Faultless, it being a Work too great for a Creature. But we shall briefly consider, CHRIST as the only Person Fit to take upon him the Management of this Trust in Four Particulars.

1. SINCE this Work or Trust must be engaged in by Treaty, 'twas necessary that he who undertook it, should be *A Person Fit to Treat with GOD the Father*. Now it was expedient, that this Treaty should be from

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Eternity. For had it been in time, then the Work of Creation could not have been in pursuance hereof, it could not have been said, that therefore GOD made all things, because he had enter'd into a Covenant to manifest his Glory to his Creatures, and when by his Permission, Man was fall'n, to recover such as were before Time, put into the Hands of a Trustee ; I say this could not be without supposing an Eternal Contract.

FURTHER, if this Contract, or Covenant of Peace had been of so late a Date as Time, there could not have been an Eternal Undertaking, or Eternal Promises. How could we understand that of the Apostle, *Titus* i. 2. where he speaks concerning GOD's having *Promised Eternal Life before the World began*? How could there have been Eternal Promises, if there had been no Eternal Treaty ; many other Absurdities would follow from the Denial hereof. Now then since there was an Eternal Treaty, 'twas necessary that the Person, whom the Father treated with, should have an Eternal Existence. GOD indeed might have purposed to save a Creature before he gave Being to it ; but he could not have treated about the Salvation of this Creature, but with such a One who was actually in Being. Now that CHRIST was from Eternity is plain, in that it is said *Col. i. 16. By Him all things were Created* ; therefore he was before Time. This may moreover be argued,

argued, from what we have in Prov. 8. 23, to 30. *He was set up from Everlasting, from the Beginning, or ever the Earth was. When there were no Depths, nor Fountains abounding with Water, nor Mountains settled; The Earth not made, nor the Heavens prepared, nor a Compass set upon the Face of the Depth, then was he, by GOD, as one brought up with him.* So in John 1. 1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with GOD, &c.* (i. e.) He Was, when all Things began to Be; which he proves ver. 3. in <sup>that</sup> *They were made by him.* By which it plainly appears, that he speaks of the Beginning of Time and Things, and not of the Gospel; and then by the *Word* he does not mean an Attribute, but a Divine Person; for ver. 14. the same *Word* is said to be *Made Flesh, and dwell among us;* which can be applied to nothing but a Person, a Thing is said to exist; but it cannot be said to dwell. Thus 'tis evident, that CHRIST was from Eternity, and therefore fit to be a Party concern'd, in an Eternal Treaty.

BUT 'tis further to be consider'd, that the Person treated with must be GOD's Equal; which may also be said concerning CHRIST, as inferr'd from the Eternity of his Existence: He could not have been Co-eternal with the Father, had he not been Co-equal; GOD calls him in Zech. 13. 7. *The Man that is, His Fellow;* and the Apostle says

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says concerning him, *Phil. 2. 6.* *He thought it no robbery to be Equal with GOD.* When he assum'd to himself the Honour due to GOD's Equal, he had not reason to think himself guilty of Robbing GOD of Glory ; He did not aspire after that which he had no Right to ; for he was *Equal with GOD*, being in the *Form of GOD*. Now had he not been so, 'twould have been a Dishonour for GOD, to enter into such a Treaty with him, in which both Parties must engage freely, without Compulsion, or Pre-obligation ; herein, one must not have Power over the other ; and the Consent of each to the Terms of this Eternal Covenant must not be by Force, or as an Act of Duty, or Subjection ; but an Act of free Choice. Therefore 'twas necessary that there should be an Equal Sovereignty, in both Persons engaged in this Treaty, which may truly be said of the Father and Son ; and therefore CHRIST is fit to enter into this Eternal Treaty, and therein to undertake this Great Trust, which he manages for his People.

2. *HE to whom so great a Trust is committed, ought to be One than cannot fail, or be Un-faithful in the Discharge thereof.* When an Affair of so great Importance was to be transacted, 'twas not convenient that there should be the least Ground of Doubt, whether or no the Person is able to bring it about. It ought not to be a Matter of Uncertainty, whether

whether GOD should have his Elect Ones presented to him or no ; Here was the Execution of the whole Counsel of his Will, all the Displays of Grace, and Mercy that ever he would manifest, and all the Glory thereof that ever he would receive, to be committed to the Management of one Person, standing in the Capacity of a Mediator and Surety ; so that if this Person fail, or miscarry in his Work, here is not only a People, everlastingly beloved, lost : But (which is infinitely more) the Divine Will frustrate, and the Revenue of Glory expected, not brought in to him ; it must therefore be consider'd, whether the Person to whom this Trust is committed, be Infinite in Power, and Faithfulness ; which can be said of none but Him, to whom the Apostle, in the Words following the Text, ascribes Glory, and that is CHRIST. *Adam* indeed ( tho' not a Mediator or Surety ) was a Trustee for All Mankind, who had a Stock of Original Righteousness to improve for them ; tho' he himself was no more than a Creature, and therefore 'twas possible that he should fall, and lose what he was entrusted with, as the Event sufficiently proved. But in this, GOD could not suffer any Disappointment, nor his Glory be hereby dispoiled ; for the Fall of the First *Adam* was not only permitted in Time, but decreed from Eternity, and order'd, as a necessary Antecedent, as well as

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an Occasion, for the Glorifying of His Grace ; and therefore whatsoever Honour he lost thereby, was regain'd with infinite Advantage. But if Man, as put into the Hands of the Second Adam, be lost ; there would be a Greater Dishonour brought to the Divine Name, then ever could be repaired. And then how could GOD say to a Creature, that all his Glory should be suspended on him ? Or that He would trust him with his own Honour, as well as with his People ? Therefore He in whom this Trust is reposed, must be more than a Creature ( tho' in his best State of Innocency ) such an One is CHRIST.

3. *He has whatsoever is needful, to qualify him to discharge so great a Work, which he was appointed to manage.* In one Nature, not too High to Suffer : In the other, not too Low to Merit. As Man appearing in the Form of a Servant, disposed to fulfil all Righteousness, to humble himself unto Death ; As GOD, he was able to bear up under his Sufferings, to raise himself from the Grave, and to add an Infinite Value to every Act of Obedience performed, that hereby he might have something of Worth, to plead before GOD, in the behalf of his People.

AND then here's a Fitness, in regard of his being the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity, to whom it is peculiar to be Sent, and to Send. GOD the Father cannot save, as a Person Sent ; nor the Holy Ghost, as

a Person Sending. Now CHRIST is Sent by the Father to redeem, and Sends his Spirit to apply what he has purchased: Thus we have frequent mention made in Scripture of the (n) *Father's Sending Christ*, and sometimes of (o) *Christ's Sending the Spirit the Comforter*, now it is necessary that the Saviour of Man should be the Gift of GOD as Sent, and the Giver of all Good, and that more especially, as the Person Sending the Spirit; both of these cannot be said of any other Person, but the Second without inverting the Order of Subsistence of the Persons in the God-head.

AND then, Who is so fit to be the Head of GOD's Adopted Sons; as his Only Begotten Son? Or to be entrusted with all that GOD has design'd to bestow on the Heirs of Salvation; as He who is by Nature the Possessor, and by the Father's Will, (p) *Appointed Heir of all things?* Who is so fit to make known the Mind of GOD, as He who was from Eternity (q) *In the Bosom of the Father*, His Co-essential (r) *Word?* Or to make us Wise to Salvation, as he who is the (s) *Wisdom of GOD?*

4. *THIS Person whose Work it is to keep his People from Falling, &c. is Fit to be the Ob-*

(n) John 5. 36. & 12. 49. & 20. 21. 1 John 4. 14.

(o) John 15. 26. & 16. 7. (p) Heb. 1. 2. (q) John 1. 18.

(r) Rev. 19. 13. (s) Prov. 8. 1. Luke 11. 49. 1 Cor. 1. 24.

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*Object of Faith, and Divine Adoration.* He who is entrusted with all things for us, ought to be entirely Depended on, and Adored by us; to abridge him of this Prerogative, would be a Reflection cast on his Crown and Dignity, as King of Saints. Now no Creature is the Object of our Trust in the Concerns of Salvation; the Prophet in the Name of the Lord denounces them (t) *Accursed that trust in Man, or make Flesh their Arm.* This may be applied to all other Creatures as well as Man; Nothing less than an All sufficient Being must be relied on, or Trusted by us for All Things. And then as for Adoration, no Creature is worthy to receive it; for it is an Ascribing a Divine Excellency, and Virtue to another, an Acknowledging that something is done by him, that is expressive of the Greatness, and deserves the Glory, due to GOD himself. This is an Honour too Great for any Finite Being, yea, 'tis so appropriate to GOD, that it cannot be transferr'd to a Creature; none can have a Right to assume it by Warrant from him, as he cannot give His Glory to another: But CHRIST has a Right to this as GOD, as we may safely depend on him for All the Blessings we hope to receive, and commit our selves to him, to be kept by him from all Threatning, or Disquieting Evils: So He is worthy

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(t) Jer. 17. 5.

to be Ador'd by us, for what He is to, and has done for us, that bespeaks our Esteem and Praise. Thus we have consider'd the Person who keeps from Falling, &c. Which leads us to shew,

2. *HOW this Redounds to the Glory of GOD.* We have already consider'd, that GOD will appear in his Glory, before the Presence whereof the Saints shall be presented; and are now to shew, How this contributes to the further setting forth his Glory. The Apostle in the Text, together with the following Words, ascribes Glory to him, upon the Account of what he will do for his People; it is said in *2 Thes. 1. 10*, that *He shall come, to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe.* There are several Things in which the Divine Glory will appear; (*viz.*)

IN that, when the Saints are Presented before GOD, there is a full Accomplishment of what was purposed, from Eternity, to be done for them; he then design'd to bring many Sons to Glory, and now they are brought there. Nothing redounds more to the Glory of a Sovereign, than that his Designs are brought about, and his Pleasure executed.

AND then the Honour of GOD is seen in the Saints being Presented to him, in that there is a People, brought before him, in whom he may Eternally display his Glory. In this lower World, the Glory of GOD

shines (as it were) through a Cloud, there is a Vail cast over it. The Light shineth in Darkness, God speaks to a People naturally *Dull of Hearing*, as the Apostle says to the *Hebrews*, Chap. 5. 11, 12. On which Account, he had *Many Things to say, Hard to be uttered* (i. e.) So, as to be understood by them, for they were, as it were, Children in Knowledge, and therefore he tells them, *That they had need that one should teach them, what be the first Principles of the Oracles of GOD.* And he tells the Church at *Corinth*, 1 Cor. 3. 2. that there were some Glorious Gospel Mysteries to be deliver'd that they were not then *Able to bear*, and therefore he had hitherto, *Fed them with Milk, and not with Strong Meat.* 'Twas for this Reason, that the Glory of the Gospel (which was for many Ages, overshadow'd by the Types and Figures, under the Ceremonial Law) did not appear so illustrious, as now it does; his People were not then able to bear the Noon-Day-Brightness, and therefore the Discoveries of the Glory of GOD were suited to the Weak Capacities of them to whom they were made known. The Blind Eye cannot conceive of the Beauty of Things. The Sun, tho' so Resplendent, and Glorious a Body, is not admir'd where 'tis not seen; Thus the Reason why GOD has so little Glory in this World is, because the Believer is not a Subject, capable of

of receiving the Full, Immediate Irradiations thereof : But when this People shall be presented to him in the End, they shall be so changed, that He may manifest himself more clearly to them ; which shall redound to his own Honour.

AND then his Glory, as a Sovereign, will be more advanced ; when his Governing Authority is not in the least controul'd, or his Right to his Subjects question'd ; when his People are Willing, Obedient, and Entirely Devoted to his Service.

WE might shew how this redounds to the Glory of GOD, in that the Soul shall then see all that Glory, which now seems to be hid in the Womb of Providence. At present his Paths are in Deep Waters, and his Foot-steps not known : But that which is not known now, shall be manifest hereafter. As the Soul *By Faith*, can see the Glory of GOD in the Works of Nature, *How the Worlds were framed by his Word*, (*Heb. 12. 3.*) with greater Clearness and Improvement, with a more Spiritual Discerning, and can therein see more of the Divine Glory, than the Eye of Reason can behold : So by the Immediate Vision of GOD, the Transcendent Glory of Gospel Grace, shall be seen more perfectly than it could before be beheld by Faith it self. We might further shew, how GOD is herein Glorified ; in that the Soul's being presented to him is a Testimonial, that all

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Enemies are overcome. His Power will appear  
Victorious in the Trophies of Victory, and  
Monuments of his Praise, that it shall then  
have erected, which shall abide as long as  
Heaven endures. It shall hence appear, that  
GOD is no Loser of Glory, by all the Cost  
and Daily Expences of Goodness and Mer-  
cy, which have continually followed them,  
of Patience and Forbearance, whereby he has  
waited to be Gracious : For Eternity shall  
be employ'd in Celebrating his Praise, for  
what was done for, and wrought in them,  
during the few Moments of Time ; which  
tho' long enough for GOD to dispatch his  
Work of Grace in : Yet, Alas ! too short  
for the Soul to ascribe to Him the Glory  
thereof. How will every Saint admire, that  
GOD should do so much for him, bestow  
so much upon him, should preserve One  
so unworthy of his Care, that Grace when  
wrought, should be maintain'd in the midst  
of Corruption, like a Spark of Fire in a Sea  
of Water ; and all this meerly the Result of  
his own Sovereign Pleasure ; when there was  
nothing out of himself, that might move him  
to Pity, or Save, he should do it Freely.  
Here's sufficient Matter of Praise, that will  
for ever be ascribed, when the Saints shall  
be brought into his Presence ; this will re-  
dound to the Glory of GOD.

3. *What is that Comfort and Advantage, a Believer may reap from hence. We have shew'd, that*

that He shall be Presented with Exceeding Joy : But we may further consider, that CHRIST's being able to do this for him, affords Matter of Great Encouragement to him in this Life. 'Tis the most refreshing Cordial to support his Fainting Spirits, when he sees Sin abounding, Conscience reproving, and finding Innumerable Faults in the best he can do; to Consider, at the same time, that he shall be presented Faultless before GOD hereafter. There are many Seasons of Trouble, wherein the Soul needs somewhat to Bear it up under its Pressures ; Holy David says, *Psal. 27. 13. He had fainted, unless he had believed to see the Goodness of the Lord in the Land of the Living.* Faith gives the Soul a View of the Divine Goodness, it shews him how Able and Willing CHRIST is to save him, how he is a present Help in Trouble ; and that revives, and comforts him, when brought very low. So in *Psal. 94. 19. In the multitude of my Thoughts within me, thy Comforts delight my Soul.* Our Thoughts are sometimes very Tumultuous and Disquieting, at other Times Distrustful and Desponding ; Here's a multitude of them, like the Waves, one following upon another in a constant Course ; What then, Is the Soul Lost ? Does Faith suffer Shipwrack, in the midst of these Storms and Tempests ? No, Here are *Comforts that delight the Soul.* Now what greater Comfort can the Soul lay hold on, than that which

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we have in the Text ? 'Twas this that did bear up the Apostle *Paul*, under the Greatest Outward Troubles that he ever met with, When he was to appear before *Nero*. See 2 Tim. 4. 6, 10, 14, 16, comp. with the 17 & 18 Verses, He was *Ready to be offered, and the Time of his Departure was at hand*. Violence and Death waited for him ; he was like a Sacrifice bound to the Altar ; 'Tis not a small Measure of Comfort that can support a Soul at such a Time. And then One had *Forsaken him, loving this present World*, was afraid to suffer the Loss of this present World for CHRIST. Another *Does him much Harm*, and in Short, *None stood with him, but all Men forsook him*. He is left alone to conflict and struggle, with Enemies and Death ; all his Friends afraid to own, and stand by him in that Perilous Season : Notwithstanding, he says, *The Lord stood with me, and strengthened me* ; that is, by his Powerful Presence ; and there is something that Faith lays hold of, for Comfort (viz.) The Promise, that *The Lord will deliver him from every evil Work, and preserve him to his Heavenly Kingdom* ; One believing View of this, can bring him in more Comfort, than all his Friends, by their most tender Compassion, or Affectionate Wishes, can do. When Temptations are strongest, Afflictions most sharp and piercing, outward Supports declining ; He may say all these are but for a Moment, and

and they shall work for me an Exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory. Suppose him cast on a Bed of Languishing, fill'd with Pain and Uneasiness; if he can but behold CHRIST, as able to keep him from dishonouring him in Adversity, and afterwards to Crown him with Victory; this will make the Night of Trouble seem short, when he hopes for a Morning, and Day-Spring of Everlasting Joy to follow; Life's Journey that is oftentimes made tedious, and unpleasant with Toil and Sorrow, will hereby be render'd delightful, when the Soul can see what Rest and Glory 'twill bring him to. There will be no Torment in unsatisfied Desires, when we know that we shall enjoy that hereafter, which at present is Wanting; He can wait for the Salvation of GOD, if so be he may but in the End be Presented Faultless before him; *I shall be satisfied* ( says the Psalmist ) *when I awake in thy Likeness*, Psalm 17. ult. If he never meets with full Satisfaction 'till then, tis enough, if at last, he may be brought into the Presence of GOD in Glory; This blunts the Edge of the sharpest Sorrows, bears him up under the Heaviest Burdens, takes away the Bitterness of Death it self, and brings a full Tide of Comfort into the Soul; when a Believer has arriv'd to a full Assurance hereof, when he can conclude that he is under the Care, and committed to the Trust and Conduct of CHRIST;

when he can say, upon good Grounds, that he is one of those who shall be brought with Joy and Triumph into the Presence of GOD; this would make Earth to be, as it were, the very Suburbs of Heaven, 'twould carry him above the Assaults of Fear, and make Afflictions easie. This is the Man that can go down to the Grave in Peace, he sees nothing disconsolating in the Chambers of Darkness, nothing affrighting in the King of Terrors; tis no displeasing thing to him to be Dissolved, that he may be with CHRIST, or to pass through the Valley of the Shadow of Death to Eternal Life.

THUS a Believer may derive abundant Sweetness from what CHRIST is able, and has undertook to do for him, from the Security he now has, as being kept by him, and the Fore-thoughts of that Exceeding Joy he shall be filled with, when presented before GOD in Glory. There are several Inferences may be raised by Way of *Application*.

1. *NOTHING can tend to the Ruine or Eternal Destruction of him, who has an Interest of CHRIST.* Such an One is continually under his safe Protection, Who is able to keep him; 'tis said of him who walketh righteously, Isa. 33. 16. that *His Place of Defence shall be the Munition of Rocks.* In his Days *Israel shall dwell safely*, says the Prophet,

phet, *Jer.* 23. 6. The Saints are indeed, in this World, like *David* sojourning in *Mesecb*, dwelling in the Tents of *Kedar*. If Inward Griefs, or Outward Calamities, could shake his Confidence, 'twould soon be moved. He might be said to stand in Slippery Places, and Salvation would be a Matter of Great Uncertainty; if he should fall from Grace, and become a Castaway, as often as he falls into Sin. *Rom.* 8. 33, *ad fin.* The Apostle enumerates many things, which some may suppose to be the Fore-runners of Ruine; First he calls for all the *Charges* or Accusations, that may be brought in against GOD's *Elect*, and answers them with these Considerations; that 'Tis *GOD* that justifieth, *CHRIST* that dyed, rose again, and makes Intercession for them. And then he supposes them in the most difficult Circumstances, in *Tribulation*, *Distress*, *Persecution*, *Famine*, *Nakedness*, *Peril* or *Sword*, *Killed all the Day*, *Counted as Sheep for the Slaughter*; yet all these cannot destroy them. And at last he concludes, that *Neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things Present, nor Things to Come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of GOD.* There is nothing in *Life* worth enjoying, at the Loss of the Divine Favour; nothing so Terrible in *Death* as to make us unwilling to pass through it, in our Way to the Heavenly Glory; and tho' we seem neglected

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glected in the Grave, buried in Silence, like those whom GOD remembers no more : Yet this shall not separate from, but bring us safely to him. As for the Force of Opposition we meet with, whilst wrestling with *Principalities and Powers*, or subject to the Rage or hurtful Designs of any *Creature*, this will not do it ; that which affects the Body cannot reach the Soul, or destroy that Grace which is seated there. The *Height of Honour*, or Secular Greatness cannot tempt us to think we have no Need of GOD ; nor will the *Depth of Misery*, into which we are plunged bring us so low, as that we shall hereby, be beneath his Care ; so that he concludes, that nothing can separate the Saints from the Love of GOD. That which indeed seems to be a Wall of Separation between GOD and the Soul, is Sin ; as in Isa. 59. 2. *Your Iniquities have separated between you and your GOD, and your Sins have hid his Face from you.* Sin is, indeed, an Alienation of Affection from GOD ; a Departure from him. It casts a Mist upon the Soul, that it cannot behold his Glory : But it cannot cloud or darken the Glory of Sovereign Grace ; tis a Contempt of the Mercy of GOD but it cannot lessen, nor stop the powerful Approaches thereof, in healing and raising the Soul ; 'tis a Forfeiture of the Love of GOD, and deserves Eternal Ruine ; which may

may bring the Poor Creature, bowed down with Sorrow, and Shame, to the Grave; awaken Conscience, and make him a Terror to himself; yea, it may make him question his Interest in CHRIST, and suppose that the Almighty has writ bitter Things against him, and holds him for an Enemy: But, at the same time, it cannot move GOD to change his Thoughts of Love, or utterly to forsake this Poor, Humbled, Self-condemned Sinner. He will remember the Soul in its Distress, and abundantly Pardon; and in his own Time, and Way, save from expected Ruine, and tho' He is Guilty, and deserves to suffer the Hottest Flames of Divine Fury; yet if a Believer in CHRIST, he shall be kept by him, and presented *Faultless*.

2. WE ought to conceive of Sin, as that which renders us very unlike what we hope to be hereafter; or what others are, who are presented *Faultless* before GOD. Let the Unconverted Sinner think how Unmeet he is for Heaven, into which no Unclean Thing can enter. May I say to such an One; How unlike art thou to the Spotless Society above? Art thou content never to be admitted there? Is thy Guilt so light? Are thy Crimes so small, as that thou seest no need of their being removed? Or, if thou presumest to hope for Heaven, what is now thy Confidence? Canst thou find any one there like thy self? Is that a Place for Obstinacy

stinacy, and Rebellion, Hardness of Heart, and Carnal Security? Is there any Pride, or Contempt of God, to be found there? Art thou fit to be set before the Presence of a Righteous and Holy GOD? What canst thou say for thy self, when Justice and Conscience find Fault with thee, when many hainous Offences, which thou canst not deny, are laid to thy Charge? Canst thou plead the Righteousness of an *Unknown Jesus*, or take Comfort from the Merits of Him, whom thou hast despised, Would'st never trust, or submit thy self to, by Faith, whose Governing Interest thou hast always opposed? Or canst thou reasonably suppose, that when others are saved, as being found Faultless, thou shall be the only Person excepted, as saved another way? Or shalt thou be received to Glory, while the Frame, and Disposition of thy Soul is directly opposite to that of the Heavenly Inhabitants? Thus here is an awakening Consideration for the Unregenerate. And as for the Believer, ought it not to excite him to press forward after what he hopes at last, to attain, and to humble him under a Sense of what now he is? Say, to thy self, O Soul, when Distrusting, or Declining in Grace, when thy Affections are too Earthly, thy Thoughts too conversant about the Things of Sense. 'O my Soul! Is this a Frame becoming my Hopes of being found Faultless? What need have

' have I that CHRIST would plead my Cause,  
' answer for my Offences, remove my Guilt,  
' and keep me from Falling ; and Oh ! How  
' happy shall I be, when perfectly freed from  
' every thing, that may have a tendency to  
' provoke GOD, and which gives me Occa-  
' sion to blame and reprove my self. Thus  
a Believer may make good Use of this, by  
considering how unlike he is, to what he  
hopes to be found, when presented before  
GOD.

3. *HOW much is done for every Saint in Order to the bringing him to Glory.* This is a Work that requires the Power of CHRIST himself ; *He is Able*, which seems to be Exclusive of all Others ; and then it is a Work, in which he exerts the Greatness of his Power. Therefore when GOD the Father committed it to him, he is said to *Have laid Help upon One that is Mighty*, Psal. 89. 19. When he had Purchased his People with his own Blood, and Began a Good Work in them by his Spirit ; He has not done all for them that he undertook to do ; he must carry on his own Work, many Graces and Comforts are to be Applied, Victories to be obtain'd, Troubles and Dangers to be deliver'd from, 'till the whole Work of Grace is finished ; so that there is much done for Souls, in Order to the bringing them to Glory. And it will hence follow, as we might add, that there are suitable Returns of Duty, Love, and Praife

expected ; they for whom so much Power is exerted, have lasting Obligations laid on them to Thankfulness.

4. *IT is of very great Concern, and absolutely Necessary, in Order to our Safety, for us to be under the Care of CHRIST.* Little doth that Proud and Obstinate Creature, that would not be under the Dominion, and values not the Protection of the Almighty ; that says, Who is Lord over me, consider what it is that he flights. Is it so great a Dishonour to be under the Care of such a One ? Art thou unsafe or mislead, whilst under his Conduct ? Is it thine Unhappiness, for him to stand thy Friend, and be thy Safeguard in Trouble ? What prodigious Folly are the Generality of Men guilty of, while thinking it a Matter of Indifference, whether CHRIST have any thing to do with them or no ? David had other Thoughts of this, when from that One Consideration, that  
(u) *The Lord was his Shepherd,* He draws many Comfortable Conclusions (viz.) that *He shall not want*, that he shall be led in Pleasant Paths, *Lye, down in Green Pastures* be led beside the still Waters ; Conducted In the Paths of Righteousness. When Falling he shall be restor'd, When walking through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, void of Fear, because comforted by his Rod and Staff. When desti-

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(u) Psal. 23. throughout.

tute and distressed with *Enemies*, here is a *Table prepared for him in their Presence*, *his Head anointed with the Oyl of Gladness*, *His Cup running over with Plenty*. *Goodness and Mercy following him*, and *an Eternal Habitation provided in the House of GOD for him*. This follows on a Soul's being under the Care of CHRIST ; 'twas on this Account that the Church was so desirous to know (w) *Where he feedeth, where he maketh his Flocks to rest at Noon*. It could expect Provision and Rest, no where else, but from him. We have an Account of the former Experiences his People have had hereof, in that 'tis said (x) *He bare them, and carried them all the Days of Old*; this is represented under the Metaphor of (y) *An Eagle stirring up her Nest, fluttering over her Young, spreading abroad her Wings, taking them, bearing them on her Wings*; so the Lord alone did lead them. And sometimes 'tis implied, in that he is said to be (z) *A Sun and Shield*, for Direction and Defence; it may be from hence concluded, that *He will give Grace and Glory, and withhold no good Thing from them*. How Miserable would this World be, was it not committed to his Care? How unavoidably would Destruction ensue, should we be left in the Hands of our Enemies, tho' but for a Moment? Now in Order to our being

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(w) Cant. 1. 7. (x) Isa. 63. 9. (y) Deut. 32. 11,  
12. (z) Psal. 84. 11.

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being under the Care of CHRIST, 'twas necessary, that we should first be Given or Committed to him, by the Father ; this was done from Eternity upon his being then constituted our Head and Surety. And as to what respects our own Act, we are said, by Faith, to Commit our Selves, and all our Concerns to him ; Herein we acquiesce in, are well-pleased with, and as it were, set our Seal to what GOD before had done ; 'tis our Subscribing to the Authority of GOD, as having a Right to dispose of us as he pleases ; an Approving of the Counsels of Wisdom, and the Provisions of Goodness, in that we are put into the Hands of one whom we can safely trust. This betaking our selves to his Care and Conduct, is set forth by several Expressions, as (a) *A Coming to him*, (b) *A Casting our Care upon him*, (c) *Flying for Refuge, to lay hold on the Hope set before us*. And 'tis done, not only in our First Closure with him : But by continued, repeated Acts of Faith ; we daily, as is needful, commit our selves to his Management, and are willing to be Kept and Provided for by CHRIST. Two Things are implied in this,

(1.) *THAT the Soul is duely apprehensive of the many Difficulties through which it is to pass.* He that sees there is Danger every Moment of Splitting against the Rocks, will set an high

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(a) John 6. 35. (b) 1 Pet. 5. 7. (c) Heb. 6. 18.

high Value on a Skilful Pilot ; and our Prone-  
ness to Fall will shew us the Necessity of be-  
ing Kept by CHRIST. Let us therefore con-  
sider, what we are to expect in our Christian  
Course and Pilgrimage, in this World. Have  
others found it (d) *A Weary Land*? Are  
we foretold, that (e) *We shall have Tri-  
bulation*; yea, *That we must through much Tribu-  
lation enter into the Kingdom of GOD*? Have  
some underwent the (f) *Fiery Trial*, (g) *Cruel  
Mockings, Banishment, Imprisonment, and the most  
tormenting Deaths*, even amongst those, of  
whom *The World was not worthy*. How many  
are often tempted, buffeted, and it may be,  
become a Pfrey to their Enemies; in some par-  
ticular Conflicts, overcome, and for a Season,  
held under their Power? And is it not  
often seen, that the Saints are under Divine  
Desertion, crying out, (h) *O that I knew where  
I might find him! I go forward, but he is not  
there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him;  
On the Left Hand where he doth work, but I can-  
not behold him; he hideth himself on the Right  
Hand, that I cannot see him?* Some have com-  
plain'd of the long Continuance of these dark  
Dispensations, as Asaph; (i) *Will the Lord  
cast off for ever? Will he be favourable no more?  
Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his Pro-  
mise fail for evermore? Hath GOD forgotten*

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(d) Isa. 32.2. (e) John 16.33. Acts 14.22. (f) 1 Pet.  
4.12. (g) Heb. 11.36, &c. (h) Job 23, 3, 8, 9. (i) Psal.  
77. 7, 8, 9.

*to be Gracious? Hath he, in Anger, shut up his tender Mercies? Sometimes they cannot see the Love of a Father in these Afflictive Dealings, tho' he does not then lay aside that Relation, or cease to Love them; hence they complain as Job (k) *Wherfore hidest thou thy Face, and boldest me for thine Enemy?* So (l) *The Terrors of GOD set themselves in array against me.* Oh! bow many! how constant! and, in all Appearance, almost Insuperable are the Difficulties of a Believer! How is he in Danger of Falling into Sin, when most raised? (m) *When he thinks he stands, he ought to be Watchful, and take heed least he fall.* When most secure, he must still depend on, and call in help from CHRIST. And when he sees Death approaching with a Summons for him to appear before a Righteous GOD, the Pillars of Nature shaken, and the Soul dislodg'd of its Body, enters into a New, Eternal World, not to have a longer Day of Patience, or a New Gospel, or other Means of Grace; but to be Saved, or for ever Lost. O what need is here of CHRIST! What need have we to be under his Care! That our Feet *Stumble not on the Dark Mountains*, that we may be Kept from Falling in Life, and not be swallowed up in Death. Thus the putting our selves under the Care of CHRIST implies a Sense of our Danger, and our Need of Him.*

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(k) Job 13. 24. (l) Chap. 6. 4. (m) 1 Cor. 10. 12

2. IT also implies, a Sense of our Inability, and of his Power, to keep, and render us secure, as being kept by him. That we cannot Keep our selves, we have shew'd under the Doctrinal Part, in that we are so Prone to Fall; but this is our Encouragement, that He is Able to Preserve us, to whose Care we are committed. Therefore when we give up our selves to him, by Faith, to be Guided and Delivered from Evil, Is there any better Way for us to surmount our Difficulties, or be safe, when surrounded with the greatest Dangers? Say therefore, 'O my GOD, I am sensible that I must meet with many Troubles, such as are enough to sink thy Poor Worm, if left to himself; Oh! how impossible is it for me to stand without Thee? But being perswaded, that thou art able to keep me: I therefore, cast my self entirely upon, and hope for Safety in Thee alone; Thy Poor, Self-confident, Wandering Prodigal desires to lay hold on thy Covenant; and to be skreen'd from the Wrath of God, under the Shadow of thy Wings; to be a Conqueror, through the Power of thy Victorious Grace; and to have Joy in that Salvation which is in Thee.'

4. *WHAT a Blessed Change does a Believer sustain in Death, to his Unspeakable Gain and Advantage.* Here's a great Change indeed; Job makes use of the same Word, to set it

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forth, (n) *I'll wait till my Change come*, i. e. 'till I dye ; the Apostle says, that (o) *He shall change our vile Bodies, and fashion them like unto his Glorious Body.* How much greater is the Change of Soul, when a Polluted, Sining, Guilty Creature shall appear without Fault. And Oh ! How great is his Gain ; (p) *To dye is Gain*, says the Apostle. Unbelief, that can see no farther than Time, thinks him a great Loser, when he parts with his Dearest Friends on Earth, is turn'd out of his Possessions, his Honour laid in the Dust, his Beauty and Comeliness over-spread with Worms ; he loses all the Prospect he had of Happiness here below. But what is all this ? Does he not gain infinitely more than his Losses amount to ? Is he a Loser, that in parting with a Mite gains a Crown ; and besides, the Believer is hereby delivered from his Burdens and Troubles, when stript of his Earthly Enjoyments ; He is freed from Sin and Sorrow, and made Partaker of Eternal Life and Joy ; He puts off Mortality, and gains Immortality ; He loses all that he Hop'd for, in this Life : But what is that, when he attains the Accomplishment of his Hopes, in a Better ! In short, when he is then found in CHRIST, tho' he suffer the Loss of all Things, he shall find all, Eminently and Transcendently, in him.

5. THIS

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(n) Job 14. 14. (o) Phil. 3. 21. (p) Phil. 1. 21.

5. THIS may tend to Comfort us under the Afflicting Hand of GOD, in the Removal of our Friends and near Relations, who dye in CHRIST. Though they are no more under our Care, are they not still under the Care of him who is Able to keep them in Death, as well as in Life? Nature indeed sometimes relents, and is apt to say as David, *Would to GOD I had dyed for thee*; or at least had gone before thee. But why should we not acquiesce in the Divine Dealings, and take Comfort from what is done for them; if we have Ground of Hope, that they are arrived safely to that place, where they are happier than they were, or than we can be, 'till, when Dying, *Death it self, is swallowed up in Victory.*

HAVING thus endeavour'd to give you some brief Account of what is contain'd, in a few Words, in the Text; yet cannot be perfectly conceiv'd of, but by those who having been in some measure, instructed what it was to be Kept from Falling, in this World; have also been made Partakers of that Joy which attends their being Presented Faultless, in the Next; it may be expected, that I should close with what is instructive in the Voice of Providence, which was the Occasion of our foregoing Meditations, as well as of many sad Thoughts in some of you, who are yet, it may be, apt to Conclude, that *Your Stroke is heavier than your Groaning*, having lost so Desirable a Friend and Near Relation, sud-

denly snatch'd away, in the Prime and Flower of her Days, leaving multitudes behind that seem'd nearer the Gates of Death : Yet, when called hence, none more willing to part with whatsoever might invite her Desire to stay, as supported with the Comfortable Hope of Enjoying a better Life than this.

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§. I. **T**IS to well known, that Funeral Discourses have been much abused, by Expatiating in the Praise of those whose Name deserves rather to be buried wth themselves in Silence ; or with a Design to Flatter their Surviving Friends, rather than advance the Glory of GOD. Yet, *To be bad in Remembrance*, seems to be a Debt due to the Name of the Righteous, as an Honour that should outlive themselves ; especially, when we may take Occasion to admire the Grace of GOD, or receive Advantage by what is Imitable, in what once they were ; Shall the Uncommon Experiences of the Establishing, and Soul-Comforting Presence of GOD, both in Life and Death, be passed by, without Regard ? Shall it not be told in *Zion*, and proclaim'd in the Gates of *Jerusalem*, how Gracious GOD has been to his People, if he appears with Strength, as a present Help in Trouble, when Flesh and Heart fails ? If we have an Argument convincing, to those that disbelieve a Providence, that

that GOD takes Notice of his People, in their Low Estate? Or if it may hereby appear, that there is such a thing as a Full Assurance of Faith, that the Saints have Comforts which none but GGD can give, and which he sometimes reserves for an Hour of Extremity, to bear them up under Pains and Weakness of Body, and to cary them out of this World Triumphing; Shall all this be passed by in Silence? Shall GOD lose the Glory of such Extraordinary Appearances of Grace, or We, the Advantage of such Lively Examples of Faith and Hope crown'd with Victory? This makes me the rather willing, to give some Account of what is of Use, and Worthy to be Remarked in the *Life and Death* of that *Excellent Person*, whose Decease occasions this Discourse.

§. 2. As to her Birth and Parentage, 'tis enough to say, that She was the *Daughter* of One Whose Memory is blessed, *The Reverend Mr. Clarkson*; a Name well known in this *Famous City*, notwithstanding all his Endeavours to Conceal his Real Worth under the Curtain of Humility. So far were his Attainments above what are Common, that to attempt to set forth his Character, tho' in the Fairest Colours, would be to lessen him; his Writings are the most Lively Picture of his Mind; his Labours, as *A Minister of Christ* (I had almost said with the Apostle,

(q) *More than a Minister*) were refreshing to many, and his Course at last finished with Joy. How delightful is it to see Grace descending, as it were, in a Line; and God making Good his Covenant, not only to his People, but to their Seed, and giving the same Person to be both *Natural* and *Spiritual Father* to his Child, as in some Measure, was apparent in this Instance. The Early Impressions, his Suitable and Religious Instructions had upon her, gave him Ground of Hope whilst he lived, that there were nothing less than the Blossomings and first Appearance of Grace; and, when he could instruct her no more, the Reading some of his Sermons were (as was acknowledg'd by her self) blessed as a Means of greater Light, and many Workings of Soul about Spiritual Things, in the following part of her Life.

§. 3. That which was *Ornamental* and *Accomplishing* in Nature, I pass by; For why should we speak of those things which are now, no more? When Man becomes a Prey to Death, it dispoils him of all that Nature had to glory in. To speak of her, as having Excell'd in *Natural* or *Acquired Endowments*, would be but to give an Instance of the Vanity of Man in his Best Estate; or that the Noblest Souls are no more excus'd from dying than the Meanest; that Death levels the

the Wise and Prudent, with the Ignorant and Foolish; or that Youth when arm'd with its greatest Strength, can no more Oppose it than enfeebled Age can call back Time, or renew it's Lease of Life, when it is almost expir'd. There is something indeed, that remains Untouch'd, and with the Soul, escapes the Grave, ascending to Heaven, from whence it came, and that is *Grace*; This so far surpasses all other Endowments, that as it is the one Thing needful, so the Principal Thing that calls for Imitation, and therefore most becoming our present Thoughts.

§. 4. To say She was *Born of GOD*, is the Highest Honour, yet the Praise hereof is due to him alone; and to speak of a Powerful, and Saving Work wrought, and carried on in her, will be to shew how much she was obliged to Divine Goodness, and how great a Debt of Thankfulness is Owing, and shall be for ever Acknowledg'd. That which she never ascrib'd to her self, but GOD, we may freely speak of, to his Glory; while desirous to advance him in his own Works, and in the Gifts which he bestows, without any regard to the Worthiness of his Creatures, according to the Counsel of his own Will, and the Exceeding Riches of abounding Grace.

§. 5. I hope it will not be Ungrateful, or Useless, to speak somewhat concerning her Conversation, long before she received the

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Sentence of Death within Her Self. Her Last Sickness was not the First Season of her Acquaintance with GOD, neither was that the first Time she had an Assurance of the Love of GOD in CHRIST ; tho' it may be, her Assurance was most Full and Comfortable, as she was then making the nearest Approaches to the End of her Race. Tho' the Evening of her Life was not overcast with the least Cloud, or Darkness of Deser-tion, 'twas Ruddy and Calm, as presaging a Glorious Morning, which should follow after the Night of Death : Yet her Day of Grace, from that Blessed Season of Love, when the Morning-Star first arose in her Soul, was attended with frequent Enterchanges of Light and Darkness ; sometimes, to use her own Words, *Made very uneasy under the Terrors of her own Thoughts*, having the most discouraging Apprehensions of her State God-ward, *Often revolving in her Mind, and Admiring the Blessed Privileges of the Gospel, and the Condescension of God therein manifested, when at the same time, not daring to claim an Interest in them.* How deeply wounded has she sometimes been, with the Sense of Sin, fearing least by reason of its Aggravations, it should be out of the Reach of Mercy ? How innumerable were her Discouragements, Burdens, Strugglings, Temptations ? How Exceeding sinful did the least and most secret Sin appear, and with what Sorrow, lamented ?

mented? And (that which discovers a Soul to be truly Humbled, and savingly Converted) those Sins which Unregenerate Nature will scarce take Notice of, or record amongst the Number of Transgressions, much less be concern'd for them, even *The Vanity of Thoughts, the Wandring of Affections from God*; those Sins, which had no other Witness but God and Conscience, seem'd so great, as tho' *More provoking than God used to Pardon.* Thus was she, for some time, after having been savingly wrought on, under sore Conflicts; sometimes hoping in the Free Mercy of God, at other times reflecting on what might tend to discourage, and did much awaken her Fears. But afterwards, it pleased God to convince her, that his Thoughts towards us are not like ours concerning him, and in enabling her not to give way to Unbelieving, Distrustful Apprehensions, that confine or lessen his Mercy; this was followed with much Comfort, and was as it were the Day Spring of Assurance, or like the bright Shining of the Sun after Rain.

§. 6. After having been carried through these Difficulties, she found for the most part, a great Serenity of Mind, in the Constant, Steady Course of Duty, having a Well-grounded Hope, and sometimes a full Perswasion of the Love of God, which she has on some Occasions expressed. And so far was this from leading to Carnal Security, that

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it can scarce be conceiv'd, what low Thoughts she had of the best of self ; what a deep Sense of the Power of Indwelling Sin ; what a firm Dependance on Christ, as being able to do nothing without him ; How watchful over her Actions and Thoughts ; How much afraid of Sin, even of the Iniquity of her Holy Things ! I cannot express this, in Words so Pathetick, or Comprehensive as her own ; which are, as follow. *I never found so much Sweetness, or solid Satisfaction in my Accesses to God, as when most sensible of my own Unworthiness, and most Apprehensive of the Infinite Fulle ness and Sutableness of the Grace laid up in Christ, from which I am encouraged, and commanded to be continually Receiving.* O ! the Infiniteness of that Treasure ! Nothing ! Nothing ! less can satisfie the restless Cravings, and Pantings of my Soul. I have been led constantly to those fresh Springs that never fail, and thereby I have experienced great Quicknings in my Applications to him, and Comfortable Rejoycing. Notwithstanding the Miserable Defects and Failures in my poor Performances, there is a Perfect Righteousness wrought out for me, which I may receive and apply by Faith, and therein stand before him ; this I can sometimes apprehend, with Clearness ; and can apply my self to him with Confidence, as the Lord my Righteousness and Strength ; and Rejoyce in Hope that I shall through that Strength be more than a Conqueror over every disturbing Corruption and Temptation ; That I shall see him as he is,

is, in the full Displays of the Glory of that Love and Grace which I cannot now comprehend, and by that Transforming Sight be made like him. But Oh ! How short, how seldom are these Interviews ! my Unbelieving Heart returns to its former Darkness and Distrust, and gives me frequent Occasion to bewail the fluctuating of my weak Faith ; O that it was stronger ! that it was more stedfast ! But Blessed be his Name ( in whom I would put my entire Trust ) there is Grace in him to help, under the Decays and Failings of Weak Grace in me ; that I may receive Grace to Elevate and Excite the Acts of Faith and Love, when sunk so low that I cannot raise them ; that from his Fulness I may receive Grace, to regulate the Actings of Grace, and to set my Soul, from Time to Time, in the right way of Improving Christ for this Grace, in its Infinite Fulness ; there is Grace to pardon all the Defects of my Actings of Grace, and take away the Defilements of them. These are Truths that feed and uphold my Faith, without which set home with Power, it must give up, under the abounding of Indwelling Corruption. These were the Breathings of her Soul, in which there is the most Lively Representation of a Mind rightly Informed, and richly Furnished with Experimental Knowledge of the Things of Christ ; and of the Work of Grace carried on with Power, in a Soul, so much humbled, as not to put the least Confidence in the Flesh, or seek Help from any Thing shott of Christ ; and

and at the same time, so much comforted, as to be led forward with Clearfulness, in the Constant Discharge of Duty, and in the Hopes and sweet Foretastes of the Heavenly Glory.

§. 7. As for what was Obvious to all that knew her ; there was in her Conversation a becoming Mixture of Gravity and Pleasantness ; as not daring, in one Extream, to make Things Sacred a Prey to the Exuberances of Wit and Fancy : So, in the other, not giving the least Occasion to their false Conceit, who suppose that Religion always chooses the Dark Retreat of a Melancholly Temper, or is directly opposite to what is cheerful, or agreeable in Common Converse. Which I rather take Notice of that it may appear true, that there are some secret Dealings, between God and a Believer, which may be attended with deep Humiliation, great inward Trouble, or unspeakable Comfort and Joy, that the reproachful World is not conscious of, and therefore cannot take Occasion to trample these Pearls under their Feet. This is like, what our Saviour speaks (*Mat. 6. 16, 18.*) of *Fasting*, and at the same time, *Not appearing to Men to Fast* ; Humbled, and it may be Dejected, as to the Inward Man, while the Countenance does not betray this Inward Trouble ; or a Soul raised with secret Transports, and yet with such an Evenness of Temper, that they who think them Delusions, or will make them the Subject of Ridicule and Scorn, or others that will

will take Occasion to advance the Creature, rather than God, shall not by the Outward Demean, read what is treasur'd up in Secret, to be made known ( according to David's Example, *Psal. 34. 2. & 66. 16.* ) only to *The Humble*, and to those that *Fear God*, or at least, to such as begin to enquire the Way to *Zion*, and will make good Use of the Knowledge of such Experiences. This is not the Attainment of all Christians, tho' eminently Gracious ; yet very much hereof was to be seen in her, whom we are now speaking of ; which seems to Answer the Proverbial Speech of *Solomon*, *Prov. 14. 10. The Heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a Stranger doth not intermeddle with his Joy.*

§. 8. Her Secret Duties we must pass over, for they were indeed conceal'd, neither are we able to judge with what Frequency, Fervour, or Success, they were engagad in ; but as to what concerns the Publick Worship of God, she was a Conscientious Attender on the Ordinances of Christ, in Season and out of Season ; valuing all Opportunities wherein she might hope for further Acquaintance with God ; calling the Sabbath her Delight, and rejoicing at the Returns thereof.

The Ministry which she had for some Years set under, was that of of Two very Worthy Persons, whereof one has for many Years served Christ in his Vineyard, the other was, some Months since, call'd hence to  
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reap the Fruit of his Labours ; both these she deservedly vaunted, as having been by their Eminent Instructive and Useful Preaching, led into the Knowledge of the Deep Things of God, in which her great Proficiency, discover'd her to have been no Unthoughtful or Unprofitable Hearer ; and if at any time, when coming to the Ordinances with raised Expectations of receiving Quicknings and Spiritual Refreshments, she found her Hopes disappointed, and her Spirit not so much enlarged, as at other times ; she was far from entertaining the least Prejudice against the Word, or him that dispensed it ; no Charge brought in against, nor Reflection cast on any, besides her self, and as a Token hereof, she would sometimes express her Resentments in such like Exclamations ; *O the Unsearchable Deceitfulness of my Heart, that is continually betraying me to an Unbecoming Temper of Spirit !* Her Soul was very much affected with those Doctrines, that have a Tendency to advance the Sovereignty of Grace, and set forth the Nothingness of the Creature. That we may see what a Blessed Improvement she made of Free and Rich Grace as a Motive to Obedience, I cannot but take Notice of her own Words to that Effect ; ( viz. ) Those Truths insisted on that tend to lead from self to Christ, opening and unfolding the Mysteries of Grace, laid up in him, so admirably suited to answer all the Necessities of Poor, Helpless, Guilty Creatures,

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encourage and quicken me in Duty. And, that we may in short conceive, by a few Words what Measures she enjoy'd of the Comforting Influences of the Spirit of God, in the carrying on of Grace; and how she Waited, as one Pressing forward towards the Mark, for further Communications hereof, let me still recite her own Words. *I desire to be found submissively Waiting for further Manifestations of special Love to me, in his own Time and Way; and tho' I have not those constant Shinnings forth of the Light of his Countenance, as some of his are blessed with, I would humbly adore him for the Enlightning I have, or have bad.*

§. 9. We are now come to Consider her, *In her Last Sickness*, which in the Space of four Days, dissolved the Bonds of Nature, and by the same Stroke, both Confin'd, and set her Free. She was, on a Sudden, seized with a very Painfull *The Collick. Distemper*, which she perceived to be the Harbinger of Death; which when it made its nearest Approaches, she declar'd, *'Twas Welcome*; not flying from it, as from an Enemy, nor seeing any thing affrighting in its Countenance; neither did she think this World too much to lose, for the Gain of that Immortality that lies beyond the Grave. Some indeed, long for Death, and as Job speaks, Chap. 3. 20, 21, 22. *Rejoyce exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the Grave*; but

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'tis because Light is given to them in Misery, and Life to the Bitter in Soul ; The Innumerable Evils and Deaths, which they sustain in Life, make them willing to enjoy Rest, if it may be had, in the Grave. Others, it may be, think that Time has been Liberal enough to them, and 'tis unreasonable to desire to live beyond the Alotted Bounds of Nature ; or that Old Age (according to what *Barzillai* says to *David*, 2 Sam. 19. 35.) has outliv'd the Pleasures of this World, and therefore now 'tis Time to answer to the Call of Death : But when, as in this Instance, we see the Young and Flourishing, never tired with Care, nor broken with Continued Sorrows ; one to whom Life seem'd to promise as much Happiness and Contentment, as it usually affords to any, yet not allur'd by what it has to give, nor tempted by all its Delights, to desire a longer Stay here, or to be *Unwilling to Dye*. When all about her were almost overwhelm'd with Grief, She was the only Person that seem'd Unconcern'd. If a Flood of Tears had been shed, it could no more have mov'd her fixed Soul, resolved to be as ready to hearken, and as willing to be gone, as Death was to call ; it could no more have induced her to be in Love with Life, which God had a Design to put a Period to, than it could have prevented her Departure, or fetch'd her back from the Dust of Death.

§. 10. Tho' her Pain was violent for many hours, and such as very much hinder'd the desired Composure of her Thoughts ; yet in this she was submissive to the Divine Will, and patient under his Hand. Had she not been, before this, prepar'd for Death, Oh ! How unfit a Season would this have been first to engage in so Important a Work, de-ferr'd till then, when 'tis so hard to bear up under Afflictions, much more to begin then to be thoughtful about Eternity. But that Work was not left to do, till this Time of Extremity ; and indeed, there was Ground enough to suppose, that the Inward Peace of Conscience, and secret Supports and Comforts she had before found Relief from, were now more Eminently Usefull to her, when brought so low, and her Pains so great. But it pleased God to give her Ease the remaining part of her Time, and therein she took Occasion to express the Inward Joy that she experienced. When Cordials were applied, for the Refreshment of Weak and Fainting Nature, she said, that she had better Cordials to refresh her than those ; the last two Days of her Life she seem'd very much disengaged from, and unconcern'd about any thing in this World, as one that had taken her leave of every thing here below, and was at leisure for nothing but Heavenly Contemplation. Her Discourse was very affecting, when ever she spake of Her Self, 'twas with the

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most Soul-humbling Expressions ; and how often did she Extoll and Admire the Love of God in Christ ! The same Truths that she was refreshed with in Life were her Comfort and Delight in Death. She had the same Self-abasing, yea, Self-abhorring, and Grace-advancing Thoughts. She had a full Assurance of Salvation, and an abundant Entrance, with a kind of Triumph, administred into it. She would be often speaking in the Words of the Apostle, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded, that he is Able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that Day ;* and with Joy Unspeakable, making Use of the Words we have insisted on, with Application to her self ; *To him who is Able to Keep me from Falling, and to Present me Faultless, &c.* Her inward Peace was too great to be express'd, as she said, *Time will fail me to express what Comfort I have.* When Nature was very weak, and her Strength and Spirits exhausted, she blessed God, that *Her Faith did not fail ;* that was Strongest, when Outward Comforts were at a very low Ebb, and she had hereby such Clear Manifestations, and Soul-refreshing Prelibations of Glory, which were a kind of Heaven in her Way to Heaven.

Her Last Words were, with a Rapture of Admiration, *O those Rays of Glory !* These are Things unutterable, Discoveries too bright for a Mortal Eye ; Nature perceives it self now

now overpower'd, and the Soul thinks its Lodging too strait, its Company unsuitable, and this World not design'd for those Triumphs which are now, as it were, begun; and therefore takes its Flight into the Bosom of Jesus, to enjoy, what it has constantly waited for, further Manifestations; to be cloathed with Immortality, and in parting with this, to gain Eternal Life.

Thus, having given some Brief Account of our *Deceased Friend*, Let us consider what Improvement ought to be made hereof. Let the Carnal, Sensual and Ungodly World enquire, whether all the Stores of Nature will afford such solid Peace and Joy, as that which the Saints have in Believing. What can support or keep the Soul from sinking in Death, but an Interest in Christ? How Sad and Doleful will its Passage be into Eternity, when it knows not whither it is going! What can bear up the Fainting Spirits brought lower with Fear than Sickness! Where can the Poor, Trembling, Departing Soul find Rest and Safety! Must it be lost, for having Chosen and Trusted in Vanity, which now, more than ever, appears to be so, in that it cannot relieve him in Distress.

O Faithless Life! Wretched, Deceitful World! Where are all thy Promises of Satisfaction? How are they mistaken who hazard their Souls, and slight those Comforts, which

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the Saints enjoy, for the Gain of that which flies from them, when there is most need of Help and Comfort!

We may moreover, from such Instances of Dying Believers comforted in their Low Estate, take Occasion to admire the Wisdom, and Faithfulness of God, in that he appears for the Soul, when nothing else can relieve it, that so hereby he may shew forth the Alsufficiency of his Grace and Power, and how Infinitely Better he is than all Things else. And then what Glorious Promises are herein fulfill'd ; as when he says (r) *He shall call upon me, and I will answer him, I will be with him in Trouble.* So (s) *When the Poor and Needy seek Water, and there is none, and their Tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.* (t) *This God is our God for ever and ever, he will be our Guide, even unto Death.* And (u) *That God will plague, destroy, and take away the Sting of Death.* And again, (w) *The Righteous bath Hope in his Death.* And that of the Psalmist, (x) *Mark the Perfect Man and Behold the Upright ; for the End of that Man is Peace.* And 'tis said, that (x) *Precious in the Sight of the Lord, is the Death of all his Saints.* (i. e.) They are Precious to God in Death, as well as in Life ; how are all

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(r) Psal. 91. 15. (s) Isa. 41. 17. (t) Psal. 48. 14.

(u) Hos. 13. 14. comp. with 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56, 57

(w) Prov. 14. 32. (x) Psal. 37. 37. (y) Psal. 116. 15.

all these Promises fulfill'd, when God stands by, and strengthens, and comforts the Believer, in Death.

And then this affords an Undeniable Argument, that *There remains a Rest for the People of God*, or that they shall be received to Glory ; for there is Rest in the Greatest Outward Troubles, in the very Borders and Territories of Death ; If the Saints have a kind of Heaven upon Earth, is it not a Sign that they shall not miss of Heaven hereafter ?

How does this further teach us, that all our Comforts depend entirely on the Spirit of God. As the most Cogent Arguments cannot convert an Unregenerate Person, unless, by Supernatural Power, God works a Change in the Soul : So the strongest Reasons, and clearest Evidences cannot comfort, unles there be a Sealing and Witnessing Work of him, who is stiled the Comforter ; 'tis Sovereign Grace that refreshes, as well as quickens and enlivens. How little, Nature can contribute to the Comforting a Believer appears, in that it is then Fainting and Dying. Before this Seafon of Comfort, when in Health, the Thoughts were composed and active, the Mind lively and discerning : Yet upon the most Exact Enquiry into it self, the Soul could not see that Matters were so well between God and it, neither had he so much Joy as now he has, even when brought so low , this shews that the Comforts of Believers are from the Spirit of God.

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And then we may in this, see the Shortness, and Uncertainty of Life, and of how great Concern it is for us to be found prepar'd, when called hence. How ought we to make Choice of God for our Portion in this Life, that he may be our Comforter in Death; a Life of Faith must necessarily go before a Dying *In Faith*, or a Dying, as it were, *By Faith*, when the Soul, like *Stephen*, sees Heaven open'd, and Christ standing in a Posture ready to receive him, and carry the Departing Soul into the Presence of God. And Oh! How Happy is he, beyond Expression, that can say, when called into another World; Go forth, my Soul, without Fear; thou art in the Hands of Him who can Protect thee; the Way thou art to go may seem Rough and Unpleasing to Nature; but it shall bring thee to a Glory, greater than thou couldst Enjoy or Hope for, in this Mortal State. This is a Double Mercy, when the Soul is not only brought safely, but with Triumph, *Into the Joy of our Lord.*

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